

T H E

7

PLAIN DEALER.

A

COMEDY.

B Y

WILLIAM WYCHERLEY.

———Ridiculum acri
Fortius et melius magnas plerumque fecat res. HOR.

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PROLOGUE.

Spoken by the PLAIN DEALER.

I THE Plain Dealer am to act to-day,
And my rough part begins before the play.
First, you who scribble, yet hate all that write,
And keep each other company in spite,
As rivals in your common mistress, Fame,
And, with faint praises, one another damn :
'Tis a good play, we know, you can't forgive,
But grudge yourselves the pleasure you receive.
Our scribbler, therefore, bluntly bid me say,
He wou'd not have the wits pleas'd here to-day.
Next, you the fine, loud gentlemen o' th' pit
Who damn all plays; yet, if y'ave any wit,
'Tis but what here you sponge, and daily get :
Poets, like friends to whom you are in debt,
You hate; and so rooks laugh, to see undone
Those pushing gamesters whom they live upon.
Well, you are sparks; and still will be i' th' fashion;
Rail then at plays, to hide your obligation.
Now, you shrewd judges, who the boxes sway,
Leading the ladies hearts and sense astray,
And, for their sakes, see all and hear no play;
Correct your cravats, foretops, look behind;
The dress and breeding of the play ne'er mind.
Plain-dealing is, you'll say, quite out of fashion;
You'll hate it here, as in a dedication.
And your fair neighbours, in a limning poet,
No more than in a painter will allow it.
Pictures too like the ladies will not please;
They must be drawn here too like goddesses.
You, as at Lely's too, wou'd truncheon wield,
And look like heroes in a painted field :
But the coarse dauber of the coming scenes,
To follow life and nature only means;
Displays you as you are, makes his fine woman
A mercenary jilt, and true to no man :
His men of wit and pleasure of the age,
Are as dull rogues as ever cumber'd stage :
He draws a friend, only to custom jilt,
And makes him naturally break his trust.
I only act a part like none of you,
And yet, you'il say, it is a fool's part too :
An honest man who, like you, never winks
At faults, but, unlike you, speaks what he thinks :
The only fool, who ne'er found patron yet,
For truth is now a fault as well as wit,
And where else, but on stages, do we see
Truth pleasing, or rewarded honesty ?
Which our bold poet does this day in me.
If not to th' honest, be to th' prosperous kind,
Some friends at court let the Plain Dealer find.

Dramatis Personæ.

MANLY, of an honest, surly, nice humour, suppos'd first in the time of the Dutch war to have procured the command of a ship out of honour, not interest, and chusing a sea-life only to avoid the world.

FREEMAN, Manly's lieutenant, a gentleman well educated, but of a broken fortune, a complier with the age.

VERNISH, Manly's bosom and only friend.

NOVEL, a pert railing coxcomb, and an admirer of novelties, makes love to Olivia.

Major OLDFOX, an old impertinent fop, given to scribbling, makes love to the Widow Blackacre.

Lord PLAUSIBLE, a ceremonious, supple, commending coxcomb, in love with Olivia.

JERRY BLACKACRE, a true raw 'squire, under age and his mother's government, bred to the law.

OLIVIA, Manly's mistress.

FIDELIA, in love with Manly, and follow'd him to sea in man's clothes.

ELIZA, cousin to Olivia.

LETTICE, Olivia's woman.

Widow BLACKACRE, a petulant, litigious widow, always in law, and mother to 'Squire Jerry.

Lawyers, Knights of the Post, Bailiffs, and Alderman; a bookseller's Apprentice, a Footboy, Sailors, Waiters, and Attendants.

SCENE, LONDON.

T H E
PLAIN DEALER.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Captain Manly's Lodging.

Enter Captain MANLY furlily, and my Lord PLAUSIBLE following him; and two Sailors behind.

MANLY.

TELL not me (my good Lord Plausible) of your decorums, supercilious forms, and slavish ceremonies; your little tricks, which you, the spaniels of the world, do daily over and over, for and to one another, not out of love or duty, but your servile fear.

L. Pla. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are too passionate; and I most humbly beg your pardon, and leave to tell you, they are the arts and rules the prudent of the world walk by.

Man. Let 'em; but I'll have no leading-strings. I can walk alone; hate a harness, and will not tug on in a faction, killing my leader behind, that another slave may do the like to me.

L. Pla. What, will you be singular then, like nobody? follow, love, and esteem no body?

Man. Rather than be general, like you, follow every body; court and kiss every body, tho' perhaps at the same time you hate every body.

L. Pla. Why, seriously, with your pardon, my dear friend——

Man. With your pardon, my no friend, I will not, as you do, whisper my hatred or my scorn, call a man fool or knave by signs or mouths over his shoulder, whilst you have him in your arms: for such as you, like common whores and pickpockets, are only dangerous to those you embrace.

L. Pla. Such as I! Heavens defend me——upon my honour——

Man. Upon your title, my Lord, if you'd have me believe you.

L. Pla. Well, then, as I am a person of honour, I never attempted to abuse or lessen any person in my life.

Man. What, you were afraid?

L. Pla. No; but seriously, I hate to do a rude thing: no, faith, I speak well of all mankind.

Man. I thought so: but know, that speaking well of all mankind is the worst kind of detraction; for it takes away the reputation of a few good men in the world, by making all alike. Now, I speak ill of most men, because they deserve it; I that can do a rude thing, rather than an unjust thing.

L. Pla. Well, tell not me, my dear friend, what people deserve; I ne'er mind that: I, like an author in a dedication, never speak well of a man for his sake, but my own; I will not disparage any man to disparage myself: for to speak ill of people behind their backs, is not like a person of honour; and truly, to speak ill of 'em to their faces, is not like a complaisant person; but if I did say or do an ill thing to any body, it shou'd be sure to be behind their backs, out of pure good manners.

Man. Very well; but I, that am an unmannerly fellow, if I ever speak well of people (which is very seldom indeed) it shou'd be sure to be behind their backs; and if I shou'd say or do ill to any, it shou'd be to their faces. I wou'd jostle a proud, strutting, over-looking coxcomb, at the head of his sycophants, rather than put out my tongue at him when he was past me; wou'd frown in the arrogant, big, dull face of an overgrown knave of business, rather than vent my spleen against him when his back was turn'd; wou'd give fawning slaves the lie, whilst they embrac'd or commended me; cowards, while they brag; call a rascal by no other title, tho' his father had left him a duke's; laugh at fools aloud before their mistresses; and must desire people to leave me, when their visits grow at last as troublesome as they were at first impertinent.

L. Pla. I wou'd not have my visits troublesome.

Man. The only way to be sure not to have 'em troublesome, is to make 'em when people are not at home;

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for your visits, like other good turns, are most obliging when made or done to a man in his absence. A pox ! why shou'd any one, because he has nothing to do, go and disturb another man's business ?

L. Pla. I beg your pardon, my dear friend. What, you have business ?

Man. If you have any, I wou'd not detain your Lordship.

L. Pla. Detain me, dear Sir ? I can never have enough of your company.

Man. I'm afraid I shou'd be tiresome : I know not what you think.

L. Pla. Well, dear Sir, I see you'd have me gone.

Man. But I see you won't. [*Aside.*]

L. Pla. Your most faithful——

Man. God be w'ye, my Lord.

L. Pla. Your most humble——

Man. Farewell.

L. Pla. And eternally——

Man. And eternally ceremony——Then the devil take thee eternally. [*Aside.*]

L. Pla. You shall use no ceremony, by my life.

Man. I do not intend it.

L. Pla. Why do you stir then ?

Man. Only to see you out of doors, that I may shut 'em against more welcomes.

L. Pla. Nay, faith, that shall not pass upon your most faithful humble servant.

Man. Nor this any more upon me. [*Aside.*]

L. Pla. Well, you are too strong for me.

Man. I'd sooner be visited by the plague ; for that only wou'd keep a man from visits, and his doors shut. [*Aside.*]

[*Exit, thrusting out my Lord Plausible. Manent Sailors.*]

1 *Sai.* Here's a cynical fellow, Jack ! what a brave fair-weather captain of a ship he wou'd make ?

2 *Sai.* He a captain of a ship ! it must be when she's in the dock then ; for he looks like one of those that get the king's commissions for hulls, to sell a king's ship when a brave fellow has fought her almost to a longboat.

1 *Sai.* On my conscience then, Jack, that's the reason our bully Tar sunk our ship ; not only that the Dutch might not have her, but that the courtiers, who laugh at wooden legs, might not make her prize.

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2 *Sai*. A pox of his sinking, Tom; we have made a base, broken, short voyage of it.

1 *Sai*. Ay, your brisk dealers in honour always make quick returns with their ships to the dock, and their men to the hospitals. 'Tis, let me see, just a month since we sail'd out of the river, and the wind was almost as cross to us as the Dutch.

2 *Sai*. Well, I forgive him sinking my own poor truck, if he would but have given me time and leave to have sav'd black Kate of Wapping's small venture.

1 *Sai*. Faith, I forgive him, since, as the purser told me, he sunk the value of five or six thousand pounds of his own, with which he was to settle himself somewhere in the Indies; for our merry lieutenant was to succeed him in his commission for the ship back; for he was resolv'd never to return to England again.

2 *Sai*. So it seem'd by his fighting.

1 *Sai*. No; but he was aweary of this side of the world here, they say.

2 *Sai*. Ay, or else he wou'd not have bid so fair for a passage into t'other.

1 *Sai*. Jack, thou think'st thyself in the forecable, thou'rt so waggish: but I tell you then, he had a mind to go live and bask himself on the sunny side of the globe.

2 *Sai*. What, out of any discontent? for he's always as dogged as an old tarpaulin, when hinder'd of a voyage by a young pantaloon captain.

1 *Sai*. 'Tis true, I never saw him pleas'd but in the fight; and then he look'd like one of us coming from the pay-table, with a new lining to our hats under our arms.

2 *Sai*. A pox, he's like the bay of Biscay, rough and angry, let the wind blow where 'twill.

1 *Sai*. Nay, there's no more dealing with him, than with the land in a storm; nor near——

2 *Sai*. 'Tis a hurry durry blade; dost thou remember after we had tugg'd hard the old leaky longboat to save his life, when I welcom'd him ashore, he gave me a box on the ear, and call'd me fawning water-dog.

Enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

1 *Sai*. Hold thy peace, Jack, and stand by, the foul weather's coming.

Man. You rascals, dogs, how cou'd this tame thing get through you?

1 Sai. Faith, to tell your honour the truth, we were at Hob in the hall, and whilst my brother and I were quarrelling about a cast, he slunk by us.

2 Sai. He's a sneaking fellow, I warrant for't.

Man. Have more care for the future, you slaves: go, and with drawn cutlasses stand at the stair-foot, and keep all that ask for me from coming up; suppose you were guarding the scuttle to the powder-room. Let none enter here, at your and their peril.

1 Sai. No, for the danger wou'd be the same: you wou'd blow them and us up, if we shou'd.

2 Sai. Must no one come to you, Sir?

Man. No man, Sir.

1 Sai. No man, Sir; but a woman then, an't like your honour——

Man. No woman neither, you impertinent dog. Wou'd you be pimping? a sea pimp is the strangest monster she has.

2 Sai. Indeed, an't like your honour, 'twill be hard for us to deny a woman any thing, since we are so newly come on shore.

1 Sai. We'll let no old woman come up, though it were our trusty landlady at Wapping.

Man. Wou'd you be witty, you brandy casks you? you become a jest as ill as you do a horse. Be gone, you dogs; I hear a noise on the stairs. [*Exit Sailors.*]

Free. Faith, I am sorry you wou'd let the fop go; I intended to have some sport with him.

Man. Sport with him! a pox then, why did you not stay? you shou'd have enjoyed your coxcomb, and had him to yourself for me.

Free. No, I shou'd not have cared for him without you neither; for the pleasures which fops afford is like that of drinking, only good when 'tis shared; and a fool, like a bottle, which wou'd make you merry in company, will make you dull alone. But how the devil could you turn a man of his quality down stairs? you use a lord with very little ceremony, it seems.

Man. A lord! what, thou art one of those who esteem men only by the marks and value fortune has set upon 'em, and never consider intrinsic worth; but counterfeit

honour will not be current with me. I weigh the man, not his title. 'Tis not the King's stamp can make the metal better or heavier. Your lord is a leaden shilling, which you bend every way, and debases the stamp he bears, instead of being raised by it. Here again, you slaves?

Enter SAILORS.

1 *Sai.* Only to receive farther instructions, an't like your Honour: what if a man shou'd bring you money, shou'd we turn him back?

Man. All men, I say: must I be pester'd with you too? you dogs, away.

2 *Sai.* Nay, I know one man your Honour wou'd not have us hinder coming to you, I'm sure.

Man. Who's that, speak quickly, slaves.

2 *Sai.* Why, a man that shou'd bring you a challenge. For though you refuse money, I'm sure you love fighting too well to refuse that.

Man. Rogue, rascal, dog! [*Kicks the Sailors out.*]

Free. Nay, let the poor rogues have their forecattle jests: they cannot help 'em in a fight, scarce when a ship's sinking.

Man. Damn their untimely jests! a servant's jest is more sauciness than his counsel.

Free. But, what, will you see nobody? not your friends?

Man. Friends!—I have but one, and he, I hear, is not in town; nay, can have but one friend, for a true heart admits but of one friendship, as of one love. But in having that friend, I have a thousand; for he has the courage of men in despair, yet the diffidency and caution of cowards; the secrecy of the revengeful, and the constancy of martyrs; one fit to advise, to keep a secret, to fight and die for his friend. Such I think him; for I have trusted him with my mistress in my absence; and the trust of beauty is sure the greatest we can shew.

Free. Well, but all your good thoughts are not for him alone, I hope? pray, what d'ye think of me for a friend?

Man. Of thee! why, thou art a Latitudinarian in friendship; that is, no friend. Thou dost side with all mankind, but wilt suffer for none. Thou art indeed like your Lord Plausible, the pink of courtesy, therefore hast no friendship: for ceremony and great professing renders friendship as much suspected, as it does religion.

Free. And no profession, no ceremony at all in friendship, were as unnatural and as undecent as in religion: and there is hardly such a thing as an honest hypocrite, who professes himself to be worse than he is, unless it be yourself; for though I could never get you to say you were my friend, I know you'll prove so.

Man. I must confess I am so much your friend I wou'd not deceive you; therefore must tell you, not only because my heart is taken up, but according to your rules of friendship, I cannot be your friend.

Free. Why, pray?

Man. Because he that is, you'll say, a true friend to a man, is a friend to all his friends: but you must pardon me, I cannot wish well to pimps, flatterers, detractors, and cowards, stiff-nodding knaves, and supple, pliant, kissing fools. Now, all these I have seen you use like the dearest friends in the world.

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—What, you observ'd me, I warrant, in the galleries at Whitehall, doing the business of the place? Pshaw, court-professions, like court-promises, go for nothing, man. But, faith, cou'd you think I was a friend to all those I hugg'd, kiss'd, flatter'd, bow'd to? Ha, ha——

Man. You told 'em so, and swore it too: I heard you.

Free. Ay; but when their backs were turn'd, did not I tell you they were rogues, villains, rascals, whom I despis'd and hated?

Man. Very fine! but what reason had I to believe you spoke your heart to me, since you profess'd deceiving so many?

Free. Why, don't you know, good captain, that telling truth is a quality as prejudicial to a man that wou'd thrive in the world, as square play to a cheat, or true love to a whore? Would you have a man speak truth to his ruin? You are severer than the law, which requires no man to swear against himself: you wou'd have me speak truth against myself, I warrant, and tell my promising friend the courtier he has a bad memory.

Man. Yes.

Free. And so make him remember to forget my business? And I shou'd tell the great lawyer too, that he takes oftener fees to hold his tongue than to speak?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. Ay, and have him hang or ruin me, when he shou'd come to be a judge and I before him? And you wou'd have me tell the new officer, who bought his employment lately, that he is a coward?

Man. Ay.

Free. And so get myself cashier'd, not him, he having the better friends, tho' I have the better sword? And I shou'd tell the scribbler of honour, that heraldry were a prettier and fitter study for so fine a gentleman than poetry?

Man. Certainly.

Free. And so find myself maul'd in his next hir'd lampoon? And you wou'd have me tell the holy lady too, she lyes with her chaplain?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. And so draw the clergy upon my back, and want a good table to dine at sometimes? And by the same reason too, I should tell you that the world thinks you a mad-man, a brutal, and have you cut my throat; or worse, hate me. What other good success of all my *Plain-dealing* cou'd I have, than what I've mention'd?

Man. Why, first, your promising courtier wou'd keep his word out of fear of more reproaches, or at least wou'd give you no more vain hopes: your lawyer wou'd serve you more faithfully; for he, having no honour but his interest, is truest still to him he knows suspects him: the new officer wou'd provoke thee to make him a coward, and so be cashier'd, that thou, or some other honest fellow, who had more courage than money, might get his place: the noble sonneteer wou'd trouble thee no more with his madrigals: the praying lady would leave off railing at wenching before thee, and not turn away her chambermaid for her own known frailty with thee: and I, instead of hating thee, shou'd love thee for thy *Plain-dealing*; and in lieu of being mortified, am proud that the world and I think not well of one another.

Free. Well, doctors differ. You are for *Plain-dealing*, I find; but against your particular notions, I have the practice of the whole world. Observe but any morning what people do when they get together on the Exchange, in Westminster-hall, or the galleries in Whitehall.

Man. I must confess, there they seem to rehearse Bays's grand dance. Here you see a bishop bowing low to a gau-

dy athiest; a judge to a doorkeeper; a great lord to a fishmonger, or scrivener with a jack-chain about his neck; a lawyer to a serjeant at arms; a velvet physician to a thread-bare chymist; and a supple gentleman-usher to a furly beef-eater; and so tread round in a preposterous huddle of ceremony to each other, whilst they can hardly hold their solemn false countenances.

Free. Well, they understand the world.

Man. Which I do not, I confess.

Free. But, Sir, pray believe the friendship I promise you real, whatsoever I have profess'd to others: try me at least.

Man. Why, what wou'd you do for me?

Free. I wou'd fight for you.

Man. That you wou'd do for your own honour: but what else?

Free. I wou'd lend you money, if I had it.

Man. To borrow more of me another time. That were putting your money to interest; an usurer wou'd be as good a friend. But what other piece of friendship?

Free. I wou'd speak well of you to your enemies.

Man. To encourage others to be your friends by a shew of gratitude. But what else?

Free. Nay, I wou'd not hear you ill spoken of behind your back by my friend.

Man. Nay, then thou'rt a friend indeed: but it were unreasonable to expect it from thee as the world goes now; when new friends, like new mistresses, are got by disparaging old ones.

Enter FIDELIA.

But here comes another will say as much at least. Dost thou not love me dev'lishly too, my little volunteer, as well as he or any man can?

Fid. Better than any man can love you, my dear Captain.

Man. Look you there, I told you so.

Fid. As well as you do truth or honour, Sir; as well—

Man. Nay, good young gentleman, enough, for shame; thou hast been a page, by thy flattering and lying, to one of those praying ladies, who love flattery so well, they are jealous of it; and were turn'd away for saying the same things to the old housekeeper for sweetmeats, as

you did to your lady; for thou flatterest every thing, and every body alike.

Fid. You, dear Sir, shou'd not suspect the truth of what I say of you, tho' to you: Fame, the old liar, is believ'd when she speaks wonders of you; you cannot be flatter'd, Sir, your merit is unspeakable.

Man. Hold, hold, Sir, or I shall suspect worse of you; that you have been a cushion-bearer to some state-hypocrites, and turn'd away by the chaplains for out-flattering their probation-sermons for a benefice.

Fid. Suspect me for any thing, Sir, but the want of love, faith, and duty to you, the bravest, worthiest of mankind; believe me, I could die for you, Sir.

Man. Nay, there you lie, Sir; did not I see thee more afraid in the fight than the chaplain of the ship, or the purser that bought his place?

Fid. Can he be said to be afraid that ventures to sea with you?

Man. Fy, fy! no more; I shall hate thy flattery worse than thy cowardice, nay, than thy bragging.

Fid. Well, I own then I was afraid, mightily afraid; yet for you I would be afraid again, an hundred times afraid; dying is ceasing to be afraid, and that I could do sure for you, and you'll believe me one day. [*Weeps.*]

Free. Poor youth! believe his eyes, if not his tongue; he seems to speak truth with them.

Man. What, does he cry! A pox on't, a maudlin flatterer is as nauseously troublesome as a maudlin drunkard. No more, you little milk-sop, do not cry, I'll never make thee afraid again; for of all men, if I had occasion, thou shouldest **not** be my second; and when I go to sea again, thou shalt venture thy life no more with me.

Fid. Why, will you leave me behind then? If you wou'd preserve my life, I'm sure you shou'd not. [*Aside.*]

Man. Leave thee behind! Ay, ay, thou art a hopeful youth for the shore only; here thou wilt live to be cheerish'd by fortune, and the great ones; for thou may'st easily come to out-flatter a dull poet, out-lie a coffeehouse or gazette-writer, out-swear a knight of the post, out-watch a pimp, out-fawn a rook, out-promise a lover, out-tail a wit, and out-brag a sea-captain: all this thou canst

do, because thou'rt a coward, a thing I hate; therefore thou'lt do better with the world than with me, and these are the good courses you must take in the world. There's good advice, at least, at parting; go, and be happy with't.

Fid. Parting, Sir! O let me not hear that dismal word.

Man. If my words frighten thee, be gone the sooner; for to be plain with thee, cowardice and I cannot dwell together.

Fid. And cruelty and courage never dwell together sure, Sir. Do not turn me off to shame and misery, for I am helpless and friendless.

Man. Friendless! there are half a score friends for thee then. [*Offers her gold.*] I leave myself no more: they'll help thee a little. Be gone, go, I must be cruel to thee (if thou call'st it so) out of pity.

Fid. If you wou'd be cruelly pitiful, Sir, let it be with your sword, not gold. [*Exit.*]

Enter first SAILOR.

1 *Sai.* We have, with much ado, turned away two gentlemen, who told us forty times over their names were Mr Novel, and Major Oldfox.

Man. Well, to your post again. [*Exit Sailor.*]
But how come those puppies coupled always together?

Free. O, the coxcombs keep each other company, to shew each other, as Novel calls it; or, as Oldfox says, like two knives, to whet one another.

Man. And set other people's teeth on edge.

Enter second SAILOR.

2 *Sai.* Here is a woman, an't like your honour, scolds and busses with us to come in, as much as a seaman's widow at the Navy-office; her name is Mrs Blackacre.

Man. That fiend too!

Free. The widow Blackacre, is it not? that litigious she petty-fogger, who is at law and difference with all the world; but I wish I could make her agree with me in the church: they say she has fifteen hundred pounds a-year jointure, and the care of her son, that is, the destruction of his estate.

Man. Her lawyers, attornies, and solicitors, have fifteen hundred pounds a-year, whilst she is contented to be poor

to make other people so; for she is as vexatious as he^r father was, the great attorney; nay, as a dozen Norfolk attornies, and as implacable an adversary as a wife suing for alimony, or a parson for his tythes; and she loves an Easter term, or any term, not as other country ladies do, to come up to be fine, cuckold their husbands, and take their pleasure; for she has no pleasure but in vexing others, and is usually cloth'd and dagled like a bawd in disguise, pursu'd thro' alleys by serjeants. When she is in town she lodges in one of the inns of chancery, where she breeds her son, and is herself his tutoress in law-French; and for her country abode, tho' she has no estate there, she chuses Norfolk. But bid her come in, with a pox to her; she's Olivia's kinswoman, and may make me amends for her visit, by some discourse of that dear woman. [*Exit Sail.*

Enter Widow BLACKACRE with a mantle, and a green bag, and several papers in the other hand; JERRY BLACKACRE, her son, in a gown, laden with green bags, following her.

Wid. I never had so much to do with a judge's door-keeper as with yours; but——

Man. But the incomparable Olivia, how does she since I went?

Wid. Since you went, my suit——

Man. Olivia, I say; is she well?

Wid. My suit, if you had not return'd——

Man. Damn your suit; how does your cousin Olivia?

Wid. My suit, I say, had been quite lost; but now——

Man. But now, where is Olivia? in town? For——

Wid. For to-morrow we are to have a hearing.

Man. Wou'd you wou'd let me have a hearing to-day.

Wid. But why won't you hear me?

Man. I am no judge, and you talk of nothing but suits: but pray, tell me, when did you see Olivia?

Wid. I am no visiter, but a woman of business; or if I ever visit, 'tis only the Chancery-lane ladies, ladies towards the law; and not any of your lazy, good-for-nothing flirts, who cannot read law-French, tho' a gallant writ it. But, as I was telling you, my suit——

Man. Damn these impertinent vexatious people of business of all sexes; they are still troubling the world with

the tedious recitals of their law-suits; and one can no more stop their mouths, than a wit's, when he talks of himself; or an intelligencer's, when he talks of other people.

Wid. And a pox of all vexatious, impertinent lovers; they are still perplexing the world with the tedious narrations of their love-suits, and discourses of their mistresses; you are as troublesome to a poor widow of business as a young coxcomby rhyming lover.

Man. And thou art as troublesome to me as a rook to a losing gamester, or a young putter of cases to his mistress or sempstress, who has love in her head for another.

Wid. Nay, since you talk of putting of cases, and will not hear me speak, hear our Jerry a little; let him put our case to you, for the trial's to-morrow; and since you are my chief witness, I wou'd have your memory refresh'd, and your judgment inform'd, that you may not give your evidence improperly. Speak out, child.

Jer. Yes, forsooth. Hem, hem! John a Stiles—

Man. You may talk, young lawyer, but I shall no more mind you, than a hungry judge does a cause after the clock has struck one.

Free. Nay, you'll find him as peevish too.

Wid. No matter. Jerry, go on. Do you observe it then, Sir, for I think I have seen you in a gown once. Lord, I cou'd hear our Jerry put cases all day long. Mark him, Sir.

Jer. John-a-Stiles—No—There are first Fitz, Pere, and Ayle—No, no, Ayle, Pere, and Fitz; Ayle is seised in fee of Blackacre; John-a-Stiles disseises Ayle; Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dies; then the Ayle—no, the Fitz—

Wid. No! the Pere, firrah.

Jer. O, the Pere! ay, the Pere, Sir, and the Fitz—no, the Ayle; no, the Pere and the Fitz, Sir, and—

Man. Damn Pere, Mere, and Fitz, Sir!

Wid. No, you are out, child: hear me, Captain, then: there are Ayle, Pere, and Fitz; Ayle is seised in fee of Blackacre; and being so seised, John-a-Stiles disseises the Ayle: Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dies; and then the Pere re-enters; the Pere, firrah, the Pere—[to Jer.]

and the Fitz enters upon the Pere, and the Ayle brings his writ of disseisin in the Post; and the Pere brings his writ of disseisin in the Pere, and——

Man. Canst thou bear this stuff, Freeman? I cou'd as soon suffer a whole noise of flatterers at a great man's levee in a morning. But thou hast servile complacency enough to listen to a quibbling statesman in disgrace, nay, and be beforehand with him, in laughing at his dull nojest; but I—— *[Offering to go out.]*

Wid. Nay, Sir, hold. Where's the *subpœna*, Jerry? I must serve you, Sir. You are requir'd by this, to give your testimony——

Man. I'll be forsworn, to be reveng'd on thee.

[Exit Manly, throwing away the subpœna.]

Wid. Get you gone, for a lawless companion. Come, Jerry, I had almost forgot, we were to meet at the master's at three: let us mind our business still, child.

Fer. Ay, forsooth, e'en so let's.

Free. Nay, Madam, now I wou'd beg you to hear me a little, a little of my business.

Wid. I have business of my own calls me away, Sir.

Free. My business wou'd prove yours too, dear Madam.

Wid. Yours wou'd be some sweet business, I warrant: what, 'tis no Westminster-Hall business? Wou'd you have my advice?

Free. No, faith, 'tis a little Westminster-Abbey business: I wou'd have your consent.

Wid. O fy, fy, Sir! To me such discourse, before my dear minor there!

Fer. Ay, ay, mother, he wou'd be taking livery and seisin of your jointure, by digging the turf; but I'll watch your waters, bully, i'fac. Come away, mother.

[Exit Jerry, haling away his mother.]

Manet FREEMAN: enter to him FIDELIA.

Fid. Dear Sir, you have pity: beget but some in our Captain for me.

Free. Where is he?

Fid. Within; swearing as much as he did in the great storm, and cursing you, and sometimes sinks into calms, and sighs, and talks of his Olivia.

Free. He wou'd never trust me to see her: is she handsome?

Fid. No, if you'll take my word: but I am not a proper judge.

Free. What is she?

Fid. A gentlewoman, I suppose, but of as mean a fortune as beauty; but her relations wou'd not suffer her to go with him to the Indies: and his aversion to this side of the world, together with the late opportunity of commanding the convoy, wou'd not let him stay here longer, tho' to enjoy her.

Free. He loves her mightily then?

Fid. Yes, so well, that the remainder of his fortune (I hear about five or six thousand pounds) he has left her, in case he had died by the way, or before she cou'd prevail with her friends to follow him; which he expected she shou'd do, and has left behind him his great bosom-friend to be her convoy to him.

Free. What charms has she for him, if she be not handsome?

Fid. He fancies her, I suppose, the only woman of truth and sincerity in the world.

Free. No common beauty, I confess.

Fid. Or else sure he wou'd not have trusted her with so great a share of his fortune in his absence; I suppose (since his late loss) all he has.

Free. Why, has he left it in her own custody?

Fid. I am told so.

Free. Then he has shew'd love to her indeed, in leaving her, like an old husband, that dies as soon as he has made his wife a good jointure; but I'll go in to him, and speak for you, and know more from him of his Olivia.

Manet FIDELIA sola.

Fid. His Olivia indeed, his happy Olivia!
Yet she was left behind, when I was with him:
But she was ne'er out of his mind or heart.
She has told him she lov'd him; I have shew'd it,
And durst not tell him so, till I had done,
Under this habit, such convincing acts
Of loving friendship for him, that thro' it
He first might find out both my sex and love:

And, when I'd had him from his fair Olivia,
 And this bright world of artful beauties here,
 Might then have hop'd he wou'd have look'd on me,
 Amongst the footy Indians ; and I cou'd,
 To chuse, there live his wife, where wives are forc'd
 To live no longer when their husbands die ;
 Nay, what's yet worse, to share 'em whilst they live
 With many rival wives. But here he comes,
 And I must yet keep out of his sight, not
 To lose it for ever.

[Exit.

Enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

Free. But, pray, what strange charms has she that cou'd
 make you love ?

Man. Strange charms indeed ! she has beauty enough
 to call in question her wit or virtue, and her form wou'd
 make a starv'd hermit a ravisher : yet her virtue and con-
 duct wou'd preserve her from the subtle lust of a pamper'd
 prelate. She is so perfect a beauty, that art could not
 better it, nor affectation deform it ; yet all that is nothing :
 her tongue as well as face ne'er knew artifice ; nor did
 ever her words or looks contradict her heart : she is all
 truth, and hates the lying, masking, daubing world, as I
 do : for which I love her, and for which I think she dis-
 likes not me. For she has often shut out of her conver-
 sation, for mine, the gaudy fluttering parrots of the town,
 apes and echoes of men only, and refus'd their common-
 plac'd pert chat, flattery, and submissions, to be entertain'd
 with my sullen bluntness and honest love : and, last of
 all, swore to me, since her parents wou'd not suffer her
 to go with me, she wou'd stay behind for no other man ;
 but follow me without their leave, if not to be obtain'd.
 Which oath——

Free. Did you think she wou'd keep ?

Man. Yes ; for she is not. I tell you, like other wo-
 men, but can keep her promise, though she has sworn to
 keep it ; but, that she might the better keep it, I left her
 the value of five or six thousand pounds : for women's
 wants are generally the most importunate solicitors to
 love or marriage.

Free. And money summons lovers, more than beauty,
 and augments but their importunity and their number ; so

makes it the harder for a woman to deny 'em. For my part, I am for the French maxim; if you wou'd have your female subjects loyal, keep 'em poor: but, in short, that your mistress may not marry, you have given her a portion.

Man. She had given me her heart first, and I am satisfied with the security; I can never doubt her truth and constancy.

Free. It seems you do, since you are fain to bribe it with money. But how come you to be so diffident of the man that says he loves you, and not doubt the woman that says it?

Man. I shou'd, I confess, doubt the love of any other woman but her, as I do the friendship of any other man but him I have trusted; but I have such proofs of their faith as cannot deceive me.

Free. Cannot!

Man. Not but I know, that generally no man can be a great enemy, but under the name of friend; and if you are a cuckold, it is your friend only that makes you so; for your enemy is not admitted to your house: if you are cheated in your fortune, 'tis your friend that does it; for your enemy is not made your trustee: if your honour or good name be injur'd, 'tis your friend that does it still, because your enemy is not believ'd against you. Therefore I rather chuse to go where honest, downright barbarity is profess'd, where men devour one another like generous hungry lions and tigers, not like crocodiles; where they think the devil white, of our complexion; and I am already so far an Indian. But if your weak faith doubts this miracle of a woman, come along with me, and believe, and thou wilt find her so handsome, that thou, who art so much my friend, wilt have a mind to ly with her, and so wilt not fail to discover what her faith and thine is to me.

When we're in love, the great adversity,
Our friends and mistresses at once we try.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter OLIVIA, ELIZA, and LETTICE.

OLIVIA.

AH, Cousin, what a world 'tis we live in! I am so weary of it.

Eliz. Truly, Cousin. I can find no fault with it, but that we cannot always live in't, for I can never be weary of it.

Oli. O hideous! you cannot be in earnest, sure, when you say you like the filthy world.

Eliz. You cannot be in earnest, sure, when you say you dislike it.

Oli. You are a very censorious creature, I find.

Eliz. I must confess, I think we women as often discover where we love, by railing, as men when they lie, by their swearing; and the world is but a constant keeping gallant, whom we fail not to quarrel with when any one crosses us, yet cannot part with't for our hearts.

Let. A gallant indeed, Madam, whom ladies first make jealous, and then quarrel with it for being so; for if, by her indiscretion, a lady be talk'd of for a man, she presently cries, *'Tis a censorious world*; if by her vanity the intrigue be found out, *'Tis a prying malicious world*; if by her oversondness the gallant proves unconstant, *'Tis a false world*; and if by her niggardliness the chambermaid tells, *'Tis a perfidious world*. But that, I'm sure, your Ladyship can't say of the world yet, as bad as 'tis.

Oli. But I may say, *'Tis a very impertinent world*. Hold your peace. And, Cousin, if the world be a gallant, 'tis such a one as is my aversion. Pray name it no more.

Eliz. But is it possible the world, which has such variety of charms for other women, can have none for you? Let's see—first, what d'ye think of dressing and fine clothes?

Oli. Dressing! Fy, fy! 'tis my aversion. But come hither, you dowdy; methinks you might have open'd this tour better: O hideous! I cannot suffer it! D'ye see how't sits?

Eliz. Well enough, Cousin, if dressing be your aversion.

Oli. 'Tis so : and for variety of rich clothes, they are more my aversion.

Let. Ay, 'tis because your Ladyship wears 'em too long : for indeed a gown, like a gallant, grows one's aversion by having too much of it.

Oli. Insatiable creature ! I'll be sworn I have had this not above three days, Cousin, and within this month have made some six more.

Eliz. Then your aversion to 'em is not altogether so great.

Oli. Alas ! 'tis for my woman only I wear 'em, Cousin.

Let. If it be for me only, Madam, pray do not wear 'em.

Eliz. But what d'ye think of visits, balls ?——

Oli. O, I detest 'em.

Eliz. Of plays ?

Oli. I abominate 'em : filthy, obscene, hideous things.

Eliz. What say you to masquerading in the winter, and Hyde-park in the summer ?

Oli. Insipid pleasures I taste not.

Eliz. Nay, if you are for more solid pleasures, what think you of a rich young husband ?

Oli. O horrid ! marriage ! what a pleasure you have found out ! I nauseate it of all things.

Let. But what doth your Ladyship think then of a liberal handsome young lover ?

Oli. A handsome young fellow, you impudent ! Be gone out of my sight : name a handsome young fellow to me ! Foh, a hideous handsome young fellow I abominate. [*Spits.*]

Eliz. Indeed ! But let's see—will nothing please you ? What d'ye think of the court ?

Oli. How the court ! the court, cousin ! my aversion, my aversion, my aversion of all aversions.

Eliz. How, the court ! where——

Oli. Where sincerity is a quality as much out of fashion, and as unprosperous as bashfulness : I cou'd not laugh at a quibble, tho' it were a fat privy-counsellor's ; nor praise a lord's ill verses, tho' I were myself the subject ; nor an old lady's young looks, though I were her woman ; nor sit to a vain young finilemaker, though he flatter'd me. In short, I cou'd not glout upon a man when he comes into a room, and laugh at him when he

goes out: I cannot rail at the absent to flatter the standers-by; I——

Eliz. Well, but railing is now so common, that 'tis no more malice, but the fashion; and the absent think they are no more the worse for being rail'd at, than the present think they're the better for being flatter'd. And for the court——

Oli. Nay, do not defend the court; for you'll make me rail at it like a trusting citizen's widow.

Eliz. Or like a Holborn lady, who cou'd not get in to the last ball, or was out of countenance in the drawing-room the last Sunday of her appearance there: for none rail at the court, but those who cannot get into it, or else who are ridiculous when they are there. And I shall suspect you were laugh'd at, when you were last there, or would be a maid of honour.

Oli. I maid of honour! To be a maid of honour, were yet of all things my aversion.

Eliz. In what sense am I to understand you? But, in fine, by the word *aversion*, I'm sure you dissemble; for I never knew woman yet us'd it, who did not. Come, our tongues bely our hearts more than our pocket-glasses do our faces: but, methinks, we ought to leave off dissembling, since 'tis grown of no use to us; for all wise observers understand us now a-days, as they do dreams, almanacs, and Dutch gazettes, by the contrary: and a man no more believes a woman, when she says she has an aversion for him, than when she says she'll cry out.

Oli. O filthy! hideous! Peace, Cousin, or your discourse will be my aversion: and you may believe me.

Eliz. Yes; for if any thing be a woman's aversion, 'tis *plain dealing* from another woman; and perhaps that's your quarrel to the world; for that will talk, as your woman says.

Oli. Talk not of me, sure: for what men do I converse with? what visits do I admit?

Enter Boy.

Boy. Here's the gentleman to wait upon you, Madam.

Oli. On me! you little unthinking fop, d'ye know what you say?

Boy. Yes, Madam; 'tis the gentleman that comes every day to you, who——

Oli. Hold your peace, you heedless little animal, and get you gone. This country boy, Cousin, takes my dancing-master, tailor, or the spruce milliner, for visitors.

[Exit Boy.]

Let. No, Madam; 'tis Mr Novel, I am sure, by his talking so loud: I know his voice too, Madam.

Oli. You know nothing, you baffle-headed stupid creature, you: you wou'd make my Cousin believe I receive visits. But if it be Mr—— what did you call him?

Let. Mr Novel, Madam: he that——

Oli. Hold your peace; I'll hear no more of him: but if it be your Mr——(I cannot think of his name again) I suppose he has followed my cousin hither.

Eliz. No, Cousin, I will not rob you of the honour of the visit: 'tis to you, Cousin; for I know him not.

Oli. Nor did I ever hear of him before, upon my honour, Cousin. Besides, ha'n't I told you, that visits, and the business of visits, flattery and detraction, are my aversion? d'ye think then I wou'd admit such a coxcomb as he is? who, rather than not rail, will rail at the dead, whom none speak ill of, rather than not flatter, will flatter the poets of the age, whom none will flatter; who affects novelty as much as the fashion, and is as fantastical, as changeable as the fashion; who likes nothing but what is new; nay, wou'd chuse to have his friend or his title a new one. In fine, he is my aversion.

Eliz. I find you do know him, Cousin; at least, have heard of him.

Oli. Yes, now I remember, I have heard of him.

Eliz. Well; but since he is such a coxcomb, for heaven's sake, let him not come up. Tell him, Mrs Lettice, your lady is not within.

Oli. No, Lettice, tell him my cousin is here, and that he may come up: for notwithstanding I detest the sight of him, you may like his conversation; and tho' I would use him scurvily, I will not be rude to you in my own lodging: since he has follow'd you hither, let him come up, I say.

Eliz. Very fine ! pray let him go to the devil, I say, for me : I know him not, nor desire it. Send him away, Mrs Lettice.

Oli. Upon my word she shan't : I must disobey your commands, to comply with your desires. Call him up, Lettice.

Eliz. Nay, I'll swear she shall not stir on that errand.
[*Holds Lettice.*]

Oli. Well then, I'll call him myself for you, since you will have it so. Mr Novel, [*Calls him at the door.*] Sir, Sir.

Enter NOVEL.

No. Madam, I beg your pardon; perhaps you were busy : I did not think you had company with you.

Eliz. Yet he comes to me, Cousin ! [*Aside.*]

Oli.— Chairs there. [*They sit.*]

No. Well ; but Madam, d'ye know whence I come, now ?

Oli. From some melancholy place, I warrant, Sir, since they have lost your good company.

Eliz. So !

No. From a place where they have treated me at dinner with so much civility and kindness, a pox on 'em, that I could hardly get away to you, dear Madam.

Oli. You have a way with you so new and obliging, Sir !

Eliz. You hate flattery, Cousin. [*Apart to Olivia.*]

No. Nay, faith, Madam, d'ye think my way new ? then you are obliging, Madam. I must confess, I hate imitation, to do any thing like other people. All that know me, do me the honour to say I am an original, faith. But, as I was saying, Madam, I have been treated to day with all the ceremony and kindness imaginable at my Lady Autumn's : but the nauseous old woman at the upper end of her table——

Oli. Revives the old Grecian custom, of serving in a death's head with their banquets.

No. Ha, ha ! fine, just i'faith, nay, and new. 'Tis like eating with the ghost in the *Libertine* : she wou'd frighten a man from her dinner with her hollow invitation, and spoil one's stomach——

Oli. To meat or women. I detest her hollow cherry cheeks : she looks like an old coach new painted ; affecting an unseemly smugness, whilst she is ready to drop in pieces.

Eliz. You hate detraction, I see, Cousin. [*Apart to Oli.*]

No. But the silly old fury, whilst she affects to look like a woman of this age, talks——

Oli. Like one of the last; and as passionately as an old courtier who has out-liv'd his office.

No. Yes, Madam; but pray let me give you her character. Then she never counts her age by the years, but——

Oli. By the masques she has liv'd to see.

No. Nay, then, Madam, I see you think a little harmless railing too great a pleasure for any but yourself; and therefore I've done.

Oli. Nay, faith, you shall tell me who you had there at dinner.

No. If you wou'd hear me, Madam.

Oli. Most patiently: speak, Sir.

No. Then, we had her daughter——

Oli. Ay, her daughter; the very disgrace to good clothes, which she always wears but to heighten her deformity, not mend it: for she is still most splendidly, gallantly ugly, and looks like an ill piece of daubing in a rich frame.

No. So! but have you done with her, Madam? And can you spare her to me a little now?

Oli. Ay, ay, Sir——

No. Then, she is like——

Oli. She is, you'd say, like a city bride, the greater fortune, but not the greater beauty, for her dress.

No. Well: yet have you done, Madam? Then she——

Oli. Then she bestows as unfortunately on her face all the graces in fashion, as the languishing eye, the hanging or pouting lip: but as the fool is never more provoking than when he aims at wit, the ill-favour'd of our sex are never more nauseous than when they wou'd be beauties, adding to their natural deformity the artificial ugliness of affectation.

Eliz. So, Cousin, I find one may have a collection of all one's acquaintances pictures as well at your house as at Mr Lely's: only the difference is, there we find 'em much handsomer than they are, and like; here much uglier, and like: and you are the first of the profession of picture-drawing I ever knew without flattery.

Oli. I draw after the life, to do no body wrong, Cousin.

Eliz. No, you hate flattery and detraction.

Oli. But, Mr Novel, who had you besides at dinner?

No. Nay, the devil take me if I tell you, unless you will allow me the privilege of railing in my turn: but, now I think on't, the women ought to be your province, as the men are mine: and you must know we had him whom—

Oli. Him, whom ——

No. What, invading me already? and giving the character before you know the man?

Eliz. No, that is not fair, though it be usual.

Oli. I beg your pardon, Mr Novel: pray go on.

No. Then, I say, we had that familiar coxcomb, who is at home wheresoever he comes.

Oli. Ay, that fool——

No. Nay then, Madam, your servant, I am gone: taking the fool out of one's mouth, is worse than taking the bread out of one's mouth.

Oli. I've done; your pardon, Mr Novel, pray proceed.

No. I say, the rogue, that he may be the only wit in company, will let nobody else talk, and——

Oli. Ay, those fops who love to talk all themselves, are of all things my aversion.

No. Then you'll let me speak, Madam, sure. The rogue, I say, will force his jest upon you: and I hate a jest that's forc'd upon a man, as much as a glass.

Eliz. Why, I hope, Sir, he does not expect a man of your temperance in jesting should do him reason?

No. What, interruption from this side too? I must then—— *[Offers to rise. Olivia holds him.]*

Oli. No, Sir.—You must know, Cousin, that fop he means, though he talks only to be commended, will not give you leave to do't.

No. But, Madam——

Oli. He a wit, hang him! he's only an adopter of straggling jests and fatherless lampoons: by the credit of which, he eats at good tables, and so, like the barren beggarwoman, lives by borrowed children.

No. Madam——

Oli. And never was author of any thing but his news: but that is still all his own.

No. Madam, pray——

Oli. An eternal babbler; and makes no more use of his

ears, than a man that sits at a play with his mistress, or in a fop-corner. He's, in fine, a base detracting fellow, and is my aversion. But who else, pr'ythee, Mr Novel, was there with you? nay, you sha'n't stir.

No. I beg your pardon, Madam: I can't stay in any place where I am not allowed a little christian liberty of railing.

Oli. Nay, pr'ythee, Mr Novel, stay; and though you shou'd rail at me, I wou'd hear you with patience: pr'ythee who else was there with you?

No. Your servant, Madam.

Oli. Nay, pr'ythee tell us, Mr Novel, pr'ythee do.

No. We had nobody else.

Oli. Nay, 'faith, I know you had. Come, my Lord Plausible was there too; who is, Cousin, a——

Eliz. You need not tell me what he is, Cousin; for I know him to be a civil, good-natured, harmless gentleman, that speaks well of all the world, and is always in good humour; and——

Oli. Hold, Cousin, hold, I hate detraction: but I must tell you, Cousin, his civility is cowardice, his good-nature want of wit, and he has neither courage nor sense to rail. And for his being always in humour, 'tis because he is never dissatisfied with himself. In fine, he is my aversion; and I never admit his visits beyond my hall.

No. No, he visit you! Damn him, a cringing, grinning rogue: if I shou'd see him coming up to you, I wou'd make bold to kick him down again. Ha!

Enter Lord PLAUSIBLE.

My dear Lord, your most humble servant.

[Rises and salutes Plausible, and kisses him.]

Eliz. So, I find kissing and railing succeed each other with the angry men as well as with the angry women, and their quarrels are like love-quarrels, since absence is the only cause of them; for as soon as the man appears again, they are over. *[Aside.]*

L. Pla. Your most faithful humble servant, generous Mr Novel: and Madam, I am your eternal slave, and kiss your fair hands; which I had done sooner, according to your commands, but——

Oli. No excuses, my Lord.

Eliz. What, you sent for him then, Cousin? *[Apart.]*

No. Ha, invited!

[*Aside.*

Oli. I know you must divide yourself; for your good company is too general a good to be engross'd by any particular friend.

L. Pla. O Lord, Madam, my company! your most obliged, faithful humble servant: but I cou'd have brought you good company indeed; for I parted at your door with two of the worthiest, bravest men——

Oli. Who are they, my Lord?

No. Who do you call the worthiest, bravest men pray?

L. Pla. O, the wisest, bravest gentlemen! men of such honour and virtue! of such good qualities! ah——

Eliz. This is a coxcomb that speaks ill of all people a different way, and libels every body with dull praise, and commonly in the wrong place; so makes his panegyricks abusive lampoons.

[*Aside.*

Oli. But pray let me know who they were.

L. Pla. Ah! such patrons of heroic virtue! such——

No. Well, but who the devil were they?

L. Pla. The honour of our nation, the glory of our age! Ah, I could dwell a twelvemonth on their praise; which indeed I might spare by telling their names: Sir John Current, and Sir Richard Court-title.

No. Court-title! ha, ha!

Oli. And Sir John Current! why will you keep such a wretch company, my Lord?

L. Pla. O Madam, seriously you are a little too severe, for he is a man of unquestion'd reputation in every thing.

Oli. Yes, because he endeavours only with the women to pass for a man of courage, and with the bullies for a man of wit; with the wits for a man of business; and with the men of business for a favourite at court; and at court for city security.

No. And for Sir Richard, he——

L. Pla. He loves your choice pick'd company, persons that——

Oli. He loves a lord indeed; but——

No. Pray, dear Madam, let me have but a bold stroke or two at his picture: he loves a lord as you say, tho'—

Oli. Though he borrow'd his money, and ne'er paid him again.

ACT II. THE PLAIN DEALER. 53

No. And wou'd bespeak a place three days before at the back end of a lord's coach to Hydepark.

L. Pla. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are both too severe.

Oli. Then to shew yet more his passion for quality, he makes love to that fulsome coach load of honour, my Lady Goodly; for he's always at her lodging.

L. Pla. Because it is the conventicle-gallant, the meeting-house of all the fair ladies, and glorious superfine beauties of the town.

No. Very fine ladies, there's first —

Oli. Her Honour, as fat as an hostess.

L. Pla. She is something plump indeed, a goodly, comely, graceful person.

No. Then there's my lady Frances, what d'ye call her? as ugly —

Oli. As a citizen's lawfully begotten daughter.

L. Pla. She has wit in abundance, and the handsomest heel, elbow, and the tip of an ear you ever saw.

No. Heel and elbow! Ha, ha! And there's my lady Betty, you know —

Oli. As fluttish and flatteringly as an Irish woman born in France.

L. Pla. Ah! all she has hangs with a loose air, indeed, and becoming negligence.

Eliz. You see all faults with lovers eyes, I find, my Lord.

L. Pla. Ah, Madam, your most obliged, faithful, humble servant to command. But you can say nothing sure against the superfine Mrs —

Oli. I know who you mean. She is as censorious and detracting a jade, as a superannuated sinner.

L. Pla. She has a smart way of raillery, 'tis confess'd.

No. And then for Mrs Grideline.

L. Pla. She, I'm sure, is —

Oli. One that never spoke ill of any body, 'tis confess'd: For she is as silent in conversation as a country lover, and no better company than a clock, or a weather-glass; for if she sounds, 'tis but once an hour, to put you in mind of the time of day, or to tell you 'twill be cold or hot, rain or snow.

L. Pla. Poor creature! she's extremely good and modest.

No. And for Mrs Bridlechin, she's —

Oli. As proud as a churchman's wife.

L. Pla. She's a woman of great spirit and honour, and will not make herself cheap, 'tis true.

No. Then Mrs Hoyden, that calls all people by their surnames, and is——

Oli. As familiar a duck——

No. As an actress in the tiring room. There I was once before-hand with you, Madam.

L. Pla. Mrs Hoydon! a poor, affable, good natur'd soul. But the divine Mrs Trifle comes thither too: Sure her beauty, virtue, and conduct, you can say nothing to.

Oli. No!

No. No!——Pray let me speak, Madam.

Oli. First, can any one be call'd beautiful that squints?

L. Pla. Her eyes languish a little, I own.

No. Languish! Ha, ha!

Oli. Languish! Then, for her conduct, she was seen at the *Country Wife* after the first day. There's for you, my Lord!

L. Pla. But, Madam, she was not seen to use her fan all the play long, turn aside her head, or by a conscious blush discover more guilt than modesty.

Oli. Very fine! Then you think a woman modest that sees the hideous *Country Wife* without blushing, or publishing her detestation of it? D'ye hear him, Cousin?

Eliz. Yes; and am, I must confess, something of his opinion: and think that as an over-conscious fool at a play, by endeavouring to shew the author's want of wit, exposes his own to more censure; so may a lady call her own modesty in question, by publicly cavilling with the poet's; for all those grimaces of honour and artificial modesty disparage a woman's real virtue, as much as the use of white and red does the natural complexion: and you must use very little, if you would have it thought your own.

Oli. Then you would have a woman of honour with passive looks, ears, and tongue, undergo all the hideous obscenity she hears at nasty plays?

Eliz. Truly, I think a woman betrays her want of modesty, by shewing it publicly in a playhouse. as much as a man does his want of courage by a quarrel there; for the truly modest and stout say least, and are least exceptions, especially in public.

Oli. O hideous ! Cousin : this cannot be your opinion. But you are one of those who have the confidence to pardon the filthy play.

Eli. Why, what is there of ill in't, say you?

Oli. O fy, fy, fy! wou'd you put me to the blush anew? call all the blood into my face again? But to satisfy you then; first, the clandestine obscenity in the very name of Horner.

Eli. Truly, 'tis so indeed; I cannot find it out, I confess.

Oli. O horrid ! Does it not give you the rank conception or image of a goat, or town-bull, or a satyr? Nay, what is yet a filthier image than all the rest, that of an eunuch?

Eli. What then? I can think of a goat, a bul, or a satyr, without any hurt.

Oli. Ay; but, Cousin, one cannot stop there.

Eli. I can, Cousin.

Oli. O no; for when you have those filthy creatures in your head once, the next thing you think, is what they do; as their defiling of honest men's beds and couches, rapes upon sleeping and waking country virgins under hedges, and on haycocks; nay, further——

Eli. Nay, no farther, Cousin : we have enough of your comment on the play, which will make me more ashamed than the play itself.

Oli. O ! believe me, 'tis a filthy play : and you may take my word for a filthy play, as soon as another's. But the filthiest thing in that play, or any other play, is——

Eli. Pray keep it to yourself, if it be so.

Oli. No, faith, you shall know it; I'm resolv'd to make you out of love with the play; I say, the lewdest, filthiest thing is his China; nay, I will never forgive the beastly author his China : he has quite taken away the reputation of poor China itself, and sully'd the most innocent and pretty furniture of a lady's chamber; insomuch that I was fain to break all my defil'd vessels. You see I have none left; nor you, I hope.

Eli. You'll pardon me, I cannot think the worse of my China for that of the playhouse.

Oli. Why, you will not keep any now, sure! 'Tis now as unfit an ornament for a lady's chamber, as the pictures that come from Italy, and other hot countries; as appears

by their nudities, which I always cover, or scratch out, wherefoe'er I find 'em. But, China! out upon't, filthy China! nasty, debauch'd China!

Eliz. All this will not put me out of conceit with China, nor the play, which is acted to-day, or another of the same beastly author's, as you call him, which I'll go see.

Oli. You will not, sure! nay, you shall not venture your reputation by going, and mine by leaving me alone with two men here; nay, you'll disoblige me for ever, if——

[*Pulls her back.*

Eliz. I say.——Your servant.

[*Exit Eliza.*

Oli. Well—but my Lord, tho' you justify every body, you cannot in earnest uphold so beastly a writer, whose ink is so smutty, as one may say.

L. Pla. Faith, I dare swear the poor man did not think to disoblige the ladies, by any amorous, soft, passionate, luscious saying in his play.

Oli. Fy, my Lord! but what think you, Mr Novel, of the play? tho' I know you are a friend to all that are new.

No. Faith, Madam, I must confess the new plays wou'd not be the worse for my advice, but I cou'd never get the silly rogues, the poets, to mind what I say. But I'll tell you what counsel I gave the surly fool you spake of.

Oli. What was't?

No. Faith, to put this play into rhyme; for rhyme, you know, often makes mystical nonsense pass with the critics for wit, and a double-meaning saying with the ladies, for soft, tender, and moving passion. But now I talk of passion, I saw your old lover this morning—Captain——

[*Whispers.*

Enter Captain MANLY, FREEMAN, and FIDELIA,
standing behind.

Oli. Whom?—nay, you need not whisper.

Man. We are luckily got hither unobserv'd.—How! in a close conversation with these subtle rascals, the outcasts of sempstresses shops!

Free. Faith, pardon her, Captain, that since she cou'd no longer be entertain'd with your manly bluntness, and honest love, she takes up with the pert chat, and common-plac'd flattery of these fluttering parrots of the town, apes and echoes of men only.

Man. Do not you, Sir, play the echo too, mock me, dally with my own words, and shew yourself as impertinent as they are.

Fres. Nay, Captain——

Fid. Nay, Lieutenant, do not excuse her; methinks she looks very kindly upon 'em both, and seems to be pleas'd with what that fool there says to her.

Man. You lie, Sir; and, hold your peace, that I may not be provok'd to give you a worse reply.

Oli. Manly return'd, d'ye say? And is he safe?

No. My Lord saw him too. Hark you, my Lord.

[*Whispers to Plausible.*]

Man. She yet seems concern'd for my safety, and perhaps they are admitted now here but for their news of me; for intelligence indeed is the common passport of nauseous fools, when they go their round of good tables and houses.

[*Aside.*]

Oli. I heard of his fighting only, without particulars; and confess I always lov'd his brutal courage, because it made me hope it might rid me of his more brutal love.

Man. What's that?

[*Apart.*]

Oli. But is he at last return'd, d'ye say, unhurt?

No. Ay, faith, without doing his business; for the rogue has been these two years pretending to a wooden leg, which he would take from Fortune as kindly as the staff of a marshal of France, and rather read his name in a Gazette——

Oli. Than in the entail of a good estate.

No. I have an ambition, I must confess, of losing my heart before such a fair enemy as yourself, Madam; but that silly rogues should be ambitious of losing their arms, and——

Oli. Looking like a pair of compasses.

No. But he has no use of his arms, but to set 'em on kimbow; for he never pulls off his hat, at least not to me, I'm sure; for you must know, Madam, he has a fanatical hatred to good company: he can't abide me.

L. Pla. O, be not so severe to him, as to say he hates good company; for I assure you he has a great respect, esteem, and kindness for me.

Man. That kind, civil rogue, has spoken yet ten thousand times worse of me, than t'other. [*Aside.*]

Oli. Well, if he be return'd, Mr Novel, then shall I be pester'd again with his boisterous sea-love; have my alcove smell like a cabin, my chamber perfum'd with his tarpaulin Brandenburgh; and hear vollies of brandy sighs, enough to make a fog in one's room. Foh! I hate a lover that smells like Thames Street.

Man. I can bear no longer, and need hear no more. [*Aside.*] But since you have these two pulvilio boxes, these essence bottles, this pair of musk-cats here, I hope I may venture to come yet nearer you.

Oli. Overheard us then!

No. I hope he heard me not. [*Aside.*]

L. Pla. Most noble and heroic Captain, your most oblig'd, faithful, humble servant.

No. Dear Tar, thy humble servant.

Man. Away——Madam——

Oli. Nay, I think I have fitted you for listening.

[*Thrusts Novel and Plausible on each side.*]

Man. You have fitted me, for believing you cou'd not be fickle, though you were young; cou'd not dissemble love, though 'twas your interest; nor be vain, though you were handsome; nor break your promise, though to a parting lover; nor abuse your best friend, though you had wit: but I take not your contempt of me worse than your esteem or civility for these things here, though you know 'em.

No. Things!

L. Pla. Let the Captain rally a little.

Man. Yes, things! canst thou be angry, thou thing?

[*Coming up to Novel.*]

No. No, since my Lord says you speak in raillery; for though your sea raillery be something rough, yet, I confess, we use one another too as bad every day at Locket's, and never quarrel for the matter.

L. Pla. Nay, noble Captain, be not angry with him: a word with you, I beseech you—— [*Whispers to Manly.*]

Oli. Well, we women, like the rest of the cheats of the world, when our cullies or creditors have found us out, and will or can trust no longer, pay debts and satisfy ob-

ligations with a quarrel, the kindest present a man can make to his mistress, when he can make no more presents; for oftentimes in love, as at cards, we are forced to play foul, only to give over the game; and use our lovers like the cards, when we can get no more by 'em, throw 'em up in a pet, upon the first dispute. [Aside.

Man. My Lord, all that you have made me know by your whispering, which I knew not before, is, that you have a stinking breath; there's a secret for your secret.

L. Pla. Pshaw! pshaw!

Man. But, Madam, tell me, pray, what was't about this spark cou'd take you? Was it the merit of his fashionable impudence, the briskness of his noise, the wit of his laugh, his judgment, or fancy in his garniture? or was it a well-trimm'd glove, or the scent of it that charm'd you?

No. Very well, Sir: 'gad these sea captains make nothing of dressing: but let me tell you, Sir, a man by his dress, as much as by any thing, shews his wit and judgment; nay, and his courage too.

Free. How his courage, Mr Novel?

No. Why, for example, by red breeches, tuck'd up hair or peruke, a greasy broad belt, and now-a-days a short sword.

Man. Thy courage will appear more by thy belt than thy sword, I dare swear. Then, Madam, for this gentle piece of courtesy, this man of tame honour, what cou'd you find in him? was it his languishing affected tone? his mannerly look? his second-hand flattery, the refuse of the playhouse tyring rooms? or his slavish obsequiousness in watching at the door of your box at the playhouse for your hand to your chair? or his jaunty way of playing with your fan? or was it the gunpowder spot on his hand, or the jewel in his ear, that purchas'd your heart?

Oli. Good jealous captain, no more of your——

L. Pla. No, let him go on, Madam, for perhaps he may make you laugh: and I wou'd contribute to your pleasure any way.

Man. Gentle rogue!

Oli. No, noble Captain, you cannot sure think any thing

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could take me more than that heroic title of yours, Captain; for, you know, we women love honour inordinately.

No. Ha, ha, faith she is with thee, bully, for thy rail-lery.

Man. Faith, so shall I be with you, no bully, for your grinning. [*Aside to Novel.*]

Oli. Then that noble lion-like mien of yours, that soldier-like weather-beaten complexion, and that manly roughness of your voice; how can they otherwise than charm us women, who hate effeminacy?

No. Ha, ha! faith I can't hold from laughing.

Man. Nor shall I from kicking, anon. [*Aside to Novel.*]

Oli. And then, that captain-like carelessness in your dress, but especially your scarf; 'twas just such another, only a little higher ty'd, made me in love with my taylor as he past by my window the last training day; for we women adore a martial man, and you have nothing wanting to make you more one, or more agreeable, but a wooden leg.

L. Pla. Nay, i'faith, there your Ladyship was a wag, and it was fine; just, and well rally'd.

No. Ay, ay, Madam, with your ladies too martial men must needs be very killing.

Man. Peace, you Bartholomew-fair buffoons; and be not you vain that these laugh on your side, for they will laugh at their own dull jests; but no more of 'em, for I will only suffer now this lady to be witty and merry.

Oli. You wou'd not have your panegyrick interrupted. I go on then to your humour. Is there any thing more agreeable than the pretty sullenness of that? than the greatness of your courage, which most of all appears in your spirit of contradiction? for you dare give all mankind the lie; and your opinion is your only mistress, for you renounce that too when it becomes another man's.

No. Ha, ha, I cannot hold, I must laugh at thee, tar, faith.

L. Pla. And i'faith, dear Captain, I beg your pardon, and leave to laugh at you too, tho' I protest I mean you no hurt; but when a lady rallies, a stander-by must be complaisant, and do her reason in laughing: ha, ha, ha!

Man. Why, you impudent, pitiful wretches! you pre-

sume sure upon your effeminacy to urge me; for you are in all things so like women, that you may think it in me a cowardice to beat you.

Oli. No hectoring, good Captain.

Man. Or, perhaps, you think this lady's presence secures you; but have a care, she has talked herself out of all the respect I had for her; and by using me ill before you, has given me a privilege of using you so before her; but if you wou'd preserve your respect to her, and not be beaten before her; go, be gone immediately.

No. Be gone! what?

L. Pla. Nay, worthy, noble, generous Captain.

Man. Be gone, I say.

No. Be gone again! to us be gone?

Man. No chattering, baboons, instantly be gone; or—

[*Manly puts 'em out of the room; Nov. struts, Pla. cringes.*]

No. Well, Madam, we'll go make the cards ready in your bedchamber: sure you will not stay long with him.

[*Exit Plausible and Novel.*]

Oli. Turn hither your rage, good Captain Swaggerhuff, and be saucy with your mistress, like a true captain; but be civil to your rivals and betters, and do not threaten any thing but me here; no, not so much as my windows; nor do not think yourself in the lodgings of one of your suburb mistresses beyond the tower.

Man. Do not give me cause to think so; for those less infamous women part with their lovers, just as you did from me, with unforc'd vows of constancy and floods of willing tears; but the same winds bear away their lovers and their vows: and for their grief, if the credulous unexpected fools return, they find new comforters, fresh cul-
lies, such as I found here. The mercenary love of those women too suffers shipwreck with their gallants fortunes; now you have heard Chance has us'd me scurvily, therefore you do too. Well, persevere in your ingratitude, falsehood and disdain; have constancy in something, and I promise you to be as just to your real scorn, as I was to your feign'd love; and henceforward will despise, condemn, hate, loath, and detest you most faithfully.

Enter LETTICE.

Oli. Get the ombre-cards ready in the next room, Lettice, and—— [*Whispers to Let.*]

Free. Bravely resolv'd, Captain.

Fid. And you'll be sure to keep your word, I hope, Sir.

Man. And I hope so too.

Fid. Do you but hope it. Sir? If you are not as good as your word, 'twill be the first time you ever bragg'd, sure.

Man. She has restor'd my reason with my heart.

Free. But now you talk of restoring, Captain, there are other things, which, next to one's heart, one wou'd not part with; I mean your jewels and money, which it seems she has, Sir.

Man. What's that to you, Sir?

Free. Pardon me; whatsoever is your's I have a share in't, I'm sure, which I will not lose for asking, tho' you may be too generous, or too angry now to do't yourself.

Fid. Nay, then I'll make bold to make my claim too.

[*Both going towards Olivia.*]

Man. Hold, you impertinent, officious fops—— How have I been deceiv'd! [*Aside.*]

Free. Madam, there are certain appurtenances to a lover's heart, call'd jewels, which always go along with it.

Fid. And which, with lovers, have no value in themselves, but from the heart they come with; our captain's, Madam, it seems you scorn to keep, and much more will those worthless things without it, I am confident.

Oli. A gentleman so well made as you are, may be confident——Us easy women cou'd not deny you any thing you ask, if 'twere for yourself; but, since 'tis for another, I beg your leave to give him my answer.——An agreeable young fellow this—and would not be my aversion [*Aside.*] Captain, your young friend here has a very persuading face, I confess; yet you might have ask'd me yourself for those trifles you left with me, which (hark you a little, for I dare trust you with the secret; you are a man of so much honour, I'm sure), I say then, not expecting your return, or hoping ever to see you again, I have deliver'd your jewels to—— [*Aside to Manly.*]

Man. Whom?

Oli. My husband.

Man. Your husband!

Oli. Ay, my husband; for since you could leave me, I am lately and privately married to one who is a man of so much honour and experience in the world, that I dare not ask him for your jewels again to restore 'em to you, lest he shou'd conclude you never would have parted with 'em to me, on any other score but the exchange of my honour; which rather than you'd let me lose, you'd lose I'm sure yourself those trifles of yours.

Man. Triumphant impudence! But, married too!

Oli. O, speak not so loud, my servants know it not. I am married; there's no resisting one's destiny, or love, you know.

Man. Why, did you love him too?

Oli. Most passionately; nay, love him now, tho' I have married him, and he me; which mutual love I hope you are too good, too generous a man to disturb, by any future claim, or visits to me. 'Tis true, he is now absent in the country, but returns shortly; therefore I beg of you, for your own ease and quiet, and my honour, you will never see me more.

Man. I wish I had never seen you.

Oli. But if you shou'd ever have any thing to say to me hereafter, let that young man there be your messenger.

Man. You wou'd be kinder to him? I find he shou'd be welcome.

Oli. Alas! his youth wou'd keep my husband from suspicions, and his visits from scandal; for we women may have pity for such as he, but no love: and I already think you do not well to spirit him away to sea; and the sea is already but too rich with the spoils of the shore.

Man. True, perfect woman!—If I could say any thing more injurious to her now, I wou'd; for I cou'd out-rail a bilk'd whore, or a kick'd coward; but now I think on't, that were rather to discover my love than hatred; and I must not talk, for something I must do. [*Aside.*]

Oli. I think I have given him enough of me now, never to be troubled with him again. [*Aside.*]

Enter LETTICE.

Well, Lettice, are all the cards ready within? I come

then. Captain, I beg your pardon : you will not make one at ombre ?

Man. No, Madam, but I'll wish you a little good luck before you go.

Oli. No, if you wou'd have me thrive, curse me ; for that you'll do heartily, I suppose.

Man. Then if you will have it so, may all the curses light upon you women ought to fear, and you deserve ; first, may the curse of loving play attend your sordid covetousness, and Fortune cheat you, by trusting to her, as you have cheated me ; the curse of pride, or a good reputation, fall on your lust ; the curse of affectation on your beauty ; the curse of your husband's company on your pleasures ; and the curse of your gallant's disappointments in his absence ; and the curse of scorn, jealousy, or despair on your love, and then the curse of loving on.

Oli. And to requite all your curses, I will only return you your last ; may the curse of loving me still fall upon your proud hard heart, that cou'd be so cruel to me in these horrid curses : but Heav'n forgive you. [*Exit Oli.*]

Man. Hell and the devil reward thee !

Free. Well, you see now, mistresses, like friends, are lost by letting 'em handle your money ; and most women are such kind of witches, who can have no power over a man, unless you give 'em money ; but when once they have got any from you, they never leave you till they have all. Therefore I never dare give a woman a farthing.

Man. Well, there is yet this comfort by losing one's money with one's mistress, a man is out of danger of getting another ; of being made prize again by Love, who, like a pirate, takes you by spreading false colours ; but when once you have run your ship a-ground, the treacherous picaroon loafs ; so by your ruin you save yourself from slavery at least.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mrs Lettice, here's Mrs Blackacre come to wait upon her Honour.

Man. D'ye hear that ? Let us be gone before she comes : for henceforward I'll avoid the whole damn'd sex for ever, and a woman as a sinking ship. [*Exeunt Man. and Fid.*]

Free. And I'll stay, to revenge on her your quarrel to the sex; for out of love to her jointure, and hatred to business, I wou'd marry her, to make an end of her thousand suits, and my thousand engagements, to the comfort of two unfortunate sort of people, my plaintiffs and her defendants, my creditors and her adversaries.

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, led in by Major OLDFOX, and JERRY BLACKACRE following, laden with green bags.

Wid. 'Tis an errant sea-ruffian; but I am glad I met with him at last, to serve him again, Major; for the last service was not good in law. Boy, duck, Jerry, where is my paper of memorandums? Give me, child: so. Where is my cousin Olivia now, my kind relation?

Free. Here is one that wou'd be your kind relation, Madam.

Wid. What mean you, Sir?

Free. Why, faith, to be short, to marry you, Widow.

Wid. Is not this the wild rude person we saw at Captain Manly's?

Jer. Ay, forsooth, an't please you.

Wid. What wou'd you? what are you? Marry me!

Free. Ay, faith; for I am a younger brother, and you are a widow.

Wid. You are an impertinent person; and go about your business.

Free. I have none but to marry thee, Widow.

Wid. But I have other business, I'd have you to know.

Free. But you have no business a-nights, Widow; and I'll make you a pleasanter business than any you have; for a-nights, I assure you, I am a man of great business; for the business—

Wid. Go, I'm sure you are an idle fellow.

Free. Try me but, Widow, and employ me as you find my abilities and industry.

Old. Pray be civil to the lady, Mr —, she is a person of quality, a person that is no person—

Free. Yes, but she's a person that is a widow: be you mannerly to her, because you are to pretend only to be her 'squire, to arm her to her lawyer's chambers; but I

will be impudent and bawdy ; for she must love and marry me.

Wid. Marry come up, you saucy familiar Jack ! You think, with us widows, 'tis no more than up, and ride. Gad forgive me, now-a-days, every idle, young, hectoring, roaring companion, with a pair of turn'd red breeches, and a broad back, thinks to carry away any widow of the best degree ! but I'd have you to know, Sir, all widows are not got, like places at court, by impudence and importunity only.

Old. No, no, soft, soft, you are a young man, and not fit——

Free. For a widow ? Yes sure, old man, the fitter.

Old. Go to, go to ; if others had not laid in their claims before you——

Free. Not you, I hope.

Old. Why not I, Sir ? Sure I am a much more proportionable match for her than you, Sir ; I, who am an elder brother, of a comfortable fortune, and of equal years with her.

Wid. How's that, you unmannerly person ? I'd have you to know I was born in *Ann. undec. Caroli prim.*

Old. Your pardon, Lady, your pardon : be not offended with your very humble servant.—But, I say, Sir, you are a beggarly younger brother, twenty years younger than her, without any land or stock, but your great stock of impudence : therefore what pretension can you have to her ?

Free. You have made it for me : first, because I am a younger brother.

Wid. Why, is that a sufficient plea to a relict ? How appears it, Sir ? by what foolish custom ?

Free. By custom time out of mind only. Then, Sir, because I have nothing to keep me after her death, I am the likelier to take care of her life. And for my being twenty years younger than her, and having a sufficient stock of impudence, I leave it to her, whether they will be valid exceptions to me in her widow's law or equity.

Old. Well, she has been so long in chancery, that I'll stand to her equity and decree between us. Come, Lady, pray snap up this young snap at first, or we shall be trou-

bled with him : give him a city widow's answer, that is, with all the ill-breeding imaginable. [*Aside to the Widow.*] Come, Madam.

Wid. Well then, to make an end of this foolish wooing, for nothing interrupts business more : first, for you, Major——

Old. You declare in my favour then?

Wid. What, direct the court ! Come, young lawyer, thou shalt be a counsel for me. [*To Jer.*

Jer. Gad, I shall betray your cause then, as well as an older lawyer ; never stir.

Wid. First, I say, for you, Major, my walking hospital of ancient foundation ; thou bag of mummy, that wouldst fall asunder, if 'twere not for cerecloths——

Old. How, Lady !

Free. Ha, ha——

Jer. Hey, brave mother ! use all suitors thus, for my sake.

Wid. Thou wither'd, hobbling, distorted cripple ; nay, thou art a cripple all over : wou'dst thou make me the staff of thy age, the crutch of thy decrepitude ? me——

Free. Well said, Widow ! faith, thou wouldst make a man love thee now, without dissembling.

Wid. Thou senseless, impertinent, quibbling, drivelling, feeble, paralytic, impotent, fumbling, frigid nincompoop.

Jer. Hey, brave mother, for calling of names, i'fac !

Wid. Wouldst thou make a caudle-maker, a nurse of me ? Canst thou be bed-rid without a bed-fellow ? Won't your swan skins, furs, flannels, and the scorch'd trencher keep you warm there ? Wou'd you have me your Scotch warming-pan, with a pox to you ? Me——

Old. O Heavens !

Free. I told you I shou'd be thought the fitter man, Major.

Jer. Ay, you old Fobus, and you wou'd have been my guardian, wou'd you ! to have taken care of my estate, that half of't should never come to me, by letting long leases at pepper-corn rents ?

Wid. If I would have married an old man, 'tis well known I might have married an earl, nay, what's more, a judge, and been cover'd the winter-nights with the

lamb-skins, which I prefer to the ermins of nobles. And dost thou think I wou'd wrong my poor minor there for you?

Free. Your minor is a chopping minor. God bless him.

[*Strokes Jerry on the head.*]

Old. Your minor may be a major of horse or foot, for his bigness; and it seems, you will have the cheating of your minor to yourself.

Wid. Pray, Sir, bear witness: cheat my minor! I'll bring my action of the case for the slander.

Free. Nay, I wou'd bear false witness for thee now, Widow, since you have done me justice, and have thought me the fitter man for you.

Wid. Fair and softly, Sir, 'tis my minor's case more than my own; and I must do him justice now on you.

Free. How!

Old. So, then.

Wid. You are, first, I warrant, some renegado from the inns of court and the law; and thou'lt come to suffer for't by the law, that is, be hang'd.

Jer. Not about your neck, forsooth, I hope.

Free. But, Madam——

Old. Hear the court.

Wid. Thou art some debauch'd, drunken, lewd, hectoring, gaming companion, and wantest some widow's old gold to nick upon; but I thank you, Sir, that's for my lawyers.

Free. Faith, we shou'd ne'er quarrel about that; for guineas would serve my turn. But, Widow——

Wid. Thou art a foul-mouth'd boaster of thy lust, a mere bragadochio of thy strength for wine and women, and wilt belie thyself more than thou dost women; and wou'd deceive me too, wou'd you?

Free. Nay, faith, Widow, this is judging without seeing the evidence.

Wid. I say, you are a worn-out whoremaster at five-and-twenty, both in body and fortune; and cannot be trusted by the common wenches of the town, lest you shou'd not pay 'em; nor by the wives of the town, lest you shou'd pay 'em: so you want women, and wou'd have me your bawd to procure 'em for you.

Free. Faith, if you had any good acquaintance, Widow, 'twou'd be civilly done of thee; for I am just come from sea.

Wid. I mean, you wou'd have me keep you, that you might turn keeper; for poor widows are only us'd like bawds by you: you go to church with us, but to get other women to ly with. In fine, you are a cheating, cozening spendthrift; and having sold your own annuity, wou'd waste my jointure.

Fer. And make havock of our estate-personal, and all our gilt-plate: I shou'd soon be picking up all our mortgag'd apostle-spoons, bowls, and beakers, out of most of the alehouses betwixt Hercules-pillars and the Boatswain in Wapping; nay, and you'd be scouring amongst my trees, and make 'em knock down one another, like routed reeling watchmen at midnight: wou'd you so, bully?

Free. Nay, pr'ythee, Widow, hear me.

Wid. No, Sir; I'd have you to know, thou pitiful, paultry, lath-back'd fellow, if I wou'd have married a young man, 'tis well known I cou'd have had any young heir in Norfolk, nay, the hopefullest young man this day at the King's-bench bar: I that am a relict and executrix of known plentiful assets and parts, who understand myself and the law. And wou'd you have me under covert-baron again? No, Sir, no covert-baron for me.

Free. But, dear Widow, hear me. I value you only, not your jointure.

Wid. Nay, Sir, hold there; I know your love to a widow is covetousness of her jointure: and a widow a little stricken in years, with a good jointure, is like an old mansion-house in a good purchase, never valu'd; but take one, take t'other; and, perhaps, when you are in possession, you'd neglect it, let it drop to the ground, for want of necessary repairs or expences upon't.

Free. No, Widow, one wou'd be sure to keep all tight, when one is to forfeit one's lease by dilapidation.

Wid. Fy, fy! I neglect my business with this foolish discourse of love. Jerry, child, let me see the list of the jury; I'm sure my cousin Olivia has some relations amongst them: but where is she?

Free. Nay, Widow, but hear me one word only.

Wid. Nay, Sir, no more, pray. I will no more hearken to your foolish love-motions, than to offers of arbitration.

[*Exit Wid. and Jer.*]

Free. Well, I'll follow thee yet ; for he that has a pretension at court, or to a widow, must never give over for a little ill usage.

Old. Therefore I'll get her by assiduity, patience, and long-sufferings, which you will not undergo ; for you idle young fellows leave off love when it comes to business ; and industry gets more women than love.

Free. Ay, Industry, the fool's and old man's merit : but I'll be industrious too, and make a business on't, and get her by law, wrangling and contests, and not by sufferings ; and, because you are no dangerous rival, I'll give thee counsel, Major.

If you litigious widow e'er wou'd gain,

Sigh not to her, but by the law complain :

To her, as to a bawd defendant, sue

With statutes, and make justice pimp for you. [*Exeunt*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Westminster-Hall.

Enter MANLY and FREEMAN, two Sailors behind.

MANLY.

I HATE this place worse than a man that has inherited a Chancery suit ; I wish I were well out on't again.

Free. Why, you need not be afraid of this place ; for a man without money needs no more fear a crowd of lawyers than a crowd of pickpockets.

Man. This, the reverend of the law wou'd have thought the palace or residence of Justice ; but, if it be, she lives here with the state of a Turkish emperor, rarely seen ; and besieg'd rather than defended by her numerous black guard here.

Free. Methinks 'tis one of their own halls in Christmas time, whither, from all parts, fools bring their money, to try, by the dice (not the worst judges) whether

it shall be their own, or no ; but after a tedious fretting and wrangling, they drop away all their money on both sides ; and finding neither the better, at last go emptily and lovingly away together to the tavern, joining their curses against the young lawyer's box that sweeps all, like the old ones.

Man. Spoken like a revelling Christmas lawyer.

Free. Yes, I was one, I confess ; but was fain to leave the law, out of conscience, and fall to making false mufters ; rather chose to cheat the King, than his subjects ; plunder, rather than take fees.

Man. Well, a plague and a purse-famine light on the law ; and that female limb of it who dragg'd me hither to-day : but pr'ythee, go see if, in that crowd of dagled gowns there, thou canst find her.

[Pointing to the crowd of Lawyers at the end of the stage.]

[Exit Freeman.]

Manet MANLY.

How hard it is to be an hypocrite !
At least to me, who am but newly so.
I thought it once a kind of knavery,
Nay, cowardice, to hide one's fault ; but now
The common frailty, love, becomes my shame.
He must not know I love th' ungrateful still,
Lest he condemn me more than she : for I,
It seems, can undergo a woman's scorn,
But not a man's——

Enter to him FIDELIA.

Fid. Sir, good Sir, generous Captain.

Man. Prithee, kind impertinence, leave me. Why shou'dst thou follow me, flatter my generosity now, since thou knowest I have no money left ? if I had it, I'd give it thee to buy my quiet.

Fid. I never follow'd yet, Sir, reward or fame, but you alone ; nor do I now beg any thing but leave to share your miseries : you shou'd not be a niggard of 'em, since, methinks, you have enough to spare. Let me follow you now, because you hate me, as you have often said.

Man. I ever hated a coward's company, I must confess.

Fid. Let me follow you till I am none then ; for you, I'm sure, will go thro' such worlds of dangers, that I shall be inur'd to 'em ; nay, I shall be afraid of your anger more than danger, and so turn valiant out of fear. Dear Captain, do not cast me off till you have tried me once more : do not, do not go to sea again without me.

Man. Thou to sea ! To court, thou fool ; remember the advice I gave thee : thou art a handsome spaniel, and canst fawn naturally : go, busk about, and run thyself into the next great man's lobby : first fawn upon the slaves without, and then run into the lady's bed-chamber ; thou may'st be admitted at last to tumble her bed. Go seek, I say, and lose me ; for I am not able to keep thee : I have not bread for myself.

Fid. Therefore I will not go, because then I may help and serve you.

Man. Thou !

Fid. I warrant you, Sir ; for at-worst, I cou'd beg or steal for you.

Man. Nay, more bragging ! Dost thou not know there's venturing your life in stealing ? Go, prithee, away : thou art as hard to shake off, as that flattering effeminating mischief, love.

Fid. Love did you name ? Why, you are not so miserable as to be yet in love, sure ?

Man. No, no ; prithee away, be gone, or—I had almost discover'd my love and shame ; well, if I had, that thing cou'd not think the worse of me—or if he did—no—yes, he shall know it—he shall—but then I must never leave him, for they are such secrets, that make parasites and pimps lords of their masters ; for any slavery or tyranny is easier than love's. [*Aside.*

Come hither, since thou art so forward to serve me : hast thou but resolution enough to endure the torture of a secret ? for such to some is insupportable.

Fid. I wou'd keep it as safe, as if your dear precious life depended on't.

Man. Damn your dearing. It concerns more than my life, my honour.

Fid. Doubt it not, Sir.

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Man. And do not discover it by too much fear of discovering it; but have a great care you let not Freeman find it out.

Fid. I warrant you, Sir; I am already all joy with the hopes of your commands, and shall be all wings in the execution of 'em: speak quickly, Sir.

Man. You said you'd beg for me.

Fid. I did, Sir.

Man. Then you shall beg for me.

Fid. With all my heart, Sir.

Man. That is, pimp for me.

Fid. How, Sir?

Man. D'ye start? Think'st thou, thou cou'dst do me any other service? Come, no dissembling honour: I know you can do it handsomely, thou wert made for't. You have lost your time with me at sea, you must recover it.

Fid. Do not, Sir, beget yourself more reasons for your aversion to me, and make my obedience to you a fault; I am the unfittest in the world to do you such a service.

Man. Your cunning arguing against it, shews but how fit you are for it. No more dissembling: here, I say; you must go use it for me to Olivia.

Fid. To her, Sir?

Man. Go flatter, lie, kneel, promise, any thing to get her for me: I cannot live unless I have her: didst thou not say thou wou'dst do any thing to save my life? and she said you had a persuading face.

Fid. But did you not say, Sir, your honour was dearer to you than your life? And wou'd you have me contribute to the loss of that, and carry love from you to the most infamous, most false, and——

Man. And most beautiful!—— [Sighs aside.

Fid. Most ungrateful woman that ever liv'd! For sure she must be so, that cou'd desert you so soon, use you so basely, and so lately too! Do not, do not forget it, Sir, and think——

Man. No, I will not forget it, but think of revenge; I will ly with her out of revenge. Go, be gone, and prevail for me, or never see me more.

Fid. You scorn'd her last night.

Man. I know not what I did last night; I dissembled last night.

Fid. Heavens!

Man. Be gone, I say, and bring me love or compliance back, or hopes at least, or I'll never see thy face again, by——

Fid. O, do not swear, Sir; first hear me.

Man. I'm impatient—away—you'll find me here till twelve.

Fid. Sir——

Man. Not one word, no insinuating argument more, or soothing persuasion; you'll have need of all your rhetoric with her; go strive to alter her, not me; be gone.

[Exit Man. at the end of the stage.

Manet FIDELIA.

Fid. Shou'd I discover to him now my sex,
And lay before him his strange cruelty,
'Twou'd but incense it more.—No, 'tis not time.
For his love must I then betray my own?
Were ever love or chance till now severe?
Or shifting woman pos'd with such a task?
Forc'd to beg that which kills her, if obtain'd;
And give away her lover, not to lose him. [Exit Fid.

Enter Widow BLACKACRE in the middle of half a dozen Lawyers, whisper'd to by a fellow in black, JERRY BLACKACRE follow'd by the crowd.

Wid. Offer me a reference, you saucy companion you! d'ye know who you speak to? Art thou a solicitor in Chancery, and offer a reference? A pretty fellow! Mr Serjeant Plodden, here's a fellow has the impudence to offer me a reference.

Ser. Flo. Who is that has the impudence to offer a reference within these walls!

Wid. Nay, for a splitter of causes to do't!

Ser. Flo. No, Madam; to a lady learned in the law, as you are, the offer of a reference were to impose upon you.

Wid. No, no, never fear me for a reference, Mr Serjeant. But come, have you not forgot your brief? Are you sure you sha'n't make the mistake of——hark you—
[Whispers.] Go then, go to your court of Common Pleas,

and say one thing over and over again : you do it so naturally, you'll never be suspected for protracting time.

Ser. Plo. Come, I know the course of the court and your business. [Exit *Ser. Plo.*

Wid. Let's see, Jerry, where are my minutes? Come, Mr Quaint, pray go talk a great deal for me in Chancery : let your words be easy, and your sense hard ; my cause requires it : branch it bravely, and deck my cause with flowers, that the snake may ly hidden. Go, and be sure you remember the decree of my Lord Chancellor *tricesimo quart'* of the queen.

Quaint I will, as I see cause, extenuate, or exemplify matter of fact ; baffle truth with impudence ; answer exceptions with questions, tho' never so impertinent ; for reasons give 'em words ; for law and equity, tropes and figures : and so relax and enervate the sinews of their argument, with the oil of my eloquence. But when my lungs can reason no longer, and not being able to say any thing more for our cause, say every thing of our adversary ; whose reputation, tho' never so clear and evident in the eye of the world, yet with sharp invectives—

Wid. Alias Billingsgate.

Quaint With poignant and sour invectives, I say, I will deface, wipe out, and obliterate his fair reputation, even as a record with the juice of lemons ; and tell such a story (for the truth on't is, all we can do for our client in Chancery is telling a story) a fine story, a long story, such a story——

Wid. Go, save thy breath for the cause ; talk at the bar, Mr Quaint ; you are so copiously fluent, you can weary any one's ears sooner than your own tongue. Go, weary our adversaries counsel, and the court : go, thou art a fine spoken person : adad, I shall make thy wife jealous of me : if you can but court the court into a decree for us. Go, get you gone, and remember—[*Whispers.* Exit *Quaint.*] Come, Mr Blunder, pray bawl soundly for me at the King's Bench ; bluster, sputter, question, cavil ; but be sure your argument be intricate enough to confound the court ; and then you do my business. Talk what you will, but be sure your tongue never stand still ; for your

own noise will secure your sense from censure: 'tis like coughing or hemming when one has got the belly-ake, which stifles the unmannerly noise. Go, dear rogue, and succeed; and I'll invite thee, e'er it be long, to more sours'd venison.

Blund. I'll warrant you, after your verdict, your judgment shall not be arrested upon ifs and ands. [*Exit.*]

Wid. Come, Mr Petulant, let me give you some new instructions for our cause in the Exchequer: are the barons fat?

Pet. Yes, no: may be they are, may be they are not: what know I? what care I?

Wid. Hey-day! I wish you wou'd but snap up the council on t'other side anon, at the bar, as much; and have a little more patience with me, that I might instruct you a little better.

Pet. You instruct me! What is my brief for, mistress?

Wid. Ay, but you seldom read your brief, but at the bar, if you do it then.

Pet. Perhaps I do, perhaps I don't, and perhaps 'tis time enough: pray hold yourself contented, mistress.

Wid. Nay, if you go there too, I will not be contented, Sir; tho' you, I see, will lose my cause for want of speaking, I wo' not: you shall hear me, and shall be instructed. Let's see your brief.

Pet. Send your solicitor to me. Instructed by a woman! I'd have you to know I do not wear a bar-gown——

Wid. By a woman! I'd have you to know, I am no common woman; but a woman conversant in the laws of the land, as well as yourself, tho' I have no bar-gown.

Pet. Go to, go to, mistress, you are impertinent, and there's your brief for you: instruct me?

[*Flings her breviate at her.*]

Wid. Impertinent, to me, you saucy Jack you! you return my breviate! but where's my fee? You'll be sure to keep that, and scan that so well, that if there chance to be but a brass half-crown in't, one's sure to hear on't again: wou'd you wou'd but look on your breviate half so narrowly. But pray give me my fee too, as well as my brief.

Pet. Mistress, that's without precedent. When did a

council ever return his fee, pray? And you are impertinent, and ignorant to demand it.

Wid. Impertinent again, and ignorant, to me! Gads-bodikens, you puny upstart in the law, to use me so; you green bag carrier, you murderer of unfortunate causes, the clerk's ink is scarce off your fingers, you that newly come from lamp-blackening the judges shoes, and are not fit to wipe mine; you call me impertinent and ignorant! I would give thee a cuff on the ear, sitting the courts; if I were ignorant. Marry-gep, if it had not been for me, thou hadst been yet but a hearing council at the bar.

[*Exit Petulant.*]

Enter Mr BUTTONGOWN, crossing the stage in haste.

Mr Buttongown, Mr Buttongown, whither so fast? what, won't you stay till we are heard?

But. I cannot, Mrs Blackacre, I must be at the council, my Lord's cause stays there for me.

Wid. And mine suffers here.

But. I cannot help it.

Wid. I'm undone.

But. What's that to me?

Wid. Consider the five pound fee, if not my cause: that was something to you.

But. Away, away; pray be not so troublesome, mistress: I must be gone.

Wid. Nay, but consider a little: I am your old client, my Lord but a new one; or let him be what he will, he will hardly be a better client to you than myself: I hope you believe I shall be in law as long as I live; therefore am no despicable client. Well, but go to your lord; I know you expect he should make you a judge one day; but I hope his promise to you will prove a true Lord's promise. But, that he might be sure to fail you, I wish you had his bond for't.

But. But what, will you yet be thus impertinent, mistress?

Wid. Nay, I beseech you, Sir, stay; if it be but to tell me my Lord's case: come, in short——

But. Nay then——

[*Exit Buttongown.*]

Wid. Well, Jerry, observe child, and lay it up for hereafter; these are those lawyers who, by being in all causes, are in none. Therefore if you'd have 'em for you, let

your adversary see 'em; for he may chance to depend upon them; and so, in being against thee, they'll be for thee.

Fer. Ay, mother; they put me in mind of the unconscionable wooers of widows, who undertake briskly their matrimonial business for their money: but when they have got it once, let who's will drudge for them. Therefore have a care of 'em forsooth. There's advice for your advice.

Wid. Well said, boy. Come, Mr Splitcause, pray go see when my cause in Chancery comes on; and go speak with Mr Quillit in the King's-Bench, and Mr Quirk in the Common Pleas, and see how our matters go there.

Enter Major OLDFOX.

Old. Lady, a good and a propitious morning to you; and may all your causes go as well as if I myself were judge of 'em.

Wid. Sir, excuse me; I am busy, and cannot answer compliments in Westminster-Hall. Go, Mr Splitcause, and come to me again to that bookfeller's; there I'll stay for you, that you may be sure to find me.

Old. No, Sir, come to the other bookfeller's: I'll attend your Ladyship thither. *[Exit Splitcause.]*

Wid. Why to the other?

Old. Because he is my bookfeller, Lady.

Wid. What, to sell you lozenges for your catarrh? or medicines for your corns? what else can a major deal with a bookfeller for?

Old. Lady, he prints for me.

Wid. Why, are you an author?

Old. Of some few essays; deign you, Lady, to peruse 'em. (She is a woman of parts, and I must win her by shewing mine.) *[Aside.]*

Enter Bookfeller's Boy.

Boy. Will you see Culpepper, Mistress? Aristotle's problems? The complete midwife?

Wid. No; let's see Dalton, Hughs, Shepherd, Wingate.

Boy. We have no law-books.

Wid. No! you are a pretty bookfeller then!

Old. Come, have you e'er a one of my essays left?

Boy. Yes, Sir, we have enough, and shall always have 'em.

Old. How so?

Boy. Why, they are good, steady, lasting ware.

Old. Nay, I hope they will live : let's see. Be pleas'd, Madam, to peruse the poor endeavours of my pen : for I have a pen, though I say it, that—— [*Gives her a book.*]

Jer. Pray let me see St George for Christendom, or, The seven Champions of England.

Wid. No, no; give him the Young Clerk's Guide. What, we shall have you read yourself into a humour of rambling and fighting, and studying military discipline, and wearing red breeches.

Old. Nay, if you talk of military discipline, shew him my treatise of the Art military.

Wid. Hold; I wou'd as willingly he shou'd read a play.

Jer. O, pray, forsooth, mother, let me have a play.

Wid. No, Sirrah; there are young students of the law enough spoil'd already with plays : they wou'd make you in love with your laundresses, or what's worse, some queen of the stage, that was a laundress; and so turn keeper before you are of age. [*Several crossing the stage.*] But stay, Jerry, is not that Mr What d'y'-call-him, that goes there; he that offer'd to sell me a suit in Chancery for five hundred pound, for a hundred down, and only paying the clerk's fees?

Jer. Ay, forsooth, 'tis he.

Wid. Then stay here, and have a care of the bags, whilst I follow him : have a care of the bags, I say.

Jer. And do you have a care, forsooth, of the statute against Champerty, I say.

Enter FREEMAN to them.

Free. So there's a limb of my widow, which was wont to be inseparable from her : She can't be far. [*Aside.*] How now, my pretty son-in-law that shall be, where's my widow?

Jer. My mother, but not your widow, will be forthcoming presently.

Free. Your servant, Major : what, are you buying furniture for a little sleeping closet, which you miscall a study? for you do only by your books, as by your wenches, bind 'em up neatly, and make 'em fine, for other people to use 'em. And your bookseller is properly your upholsterer; for he furnishes your room, rather than your head.

Old. Well, well, good sea-lieutenant, study you your

compass, that's more than your head can deal with. (I will go find out the widow, to keep her out of his sight, or he'll board her, whilst I am treating a peace.) [*Aside.*

[*Exit Oldfox.*

Manent FREEMAN, JERRY.

Jer. Nay, prithee, friend, now let me have but the Seven Champions: you shall trust me no longer than till my mother's Mr Splitcause comes; for I hope he'll lend me wherewithal to pay for it.

Free. Lend thee! here, I'll pay him. Do you want money, Squire? I'm sorry a man of your estate shou'd want money.

Jer. Nay, my mother will ne'er let me be at age: and till then, she says——

Free. At age! why, you are at age already to have spent an estate, man: there are younger than you have kept their women these three years, have had half a dozen claps, and lost as many thousand pounds at play.

Jer. Ay, they are happy sparks; nay, I know some of my school-fellows, who, when we were at school, were two years younger than me; but now, I know not how, are grown men before me; and go where they will, and look to themselves: but my curmudgeonly mother won't allow me wherewithal to be a man of myself with.

Free. Why, there 'tis; I knew your mother was in fault. Ask but your school-fellows, what they did to be men of themselves.

Jer. Why, I know they went to law with their mothers: for they say, there's no good to be done upon a widow-mother, till one goes to law with her; but mine is as plaguey a lawyer as any's of our inn. Then wou'd she marry too, and cut down my trees. Now, I shou'd hate, man, to have my father's wife kiss'd, and slapt, and t'other thing too (you know what I mean) by another man: and our trees are the purest, tall, even shady twigs, by my fa——

Free. Come, 'squire, let your mother and your trees fall as she pleases, rather than wear this gown, and carry green bags all thy life, and be pointed at for a tony. But you shall be able to deal with her yet the common ways. Thou shalt make false love to some lawyer's daughter,

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whose father, upon the hopes of thy marrying her, shall lend thee money and law, to preserve thy estate and trees: and thy mother is so ugly, nobody will have her, if she cannot cut down thy trees.

Jer. Nay, if I had but any body to stand by me, I am as stomachful as another.

Free. That will I; I'll not see any hopeful young gentleman abus'd.

Boy. By any but yourself. [*Aside.*

Jer. The truth on't is, mine's as arrant a widow-mother to her poor child, as any's in England. She won't so much as let one have sixpence in one's pocket, to see a motion, or the dancing of the ropes, or ——

Free. Come, you shan't want money: there's gold for you.

Jer. O Lord, Sir, two guineas! d'ye lend me this? is there no trick in't? well, Sir, I'll give you bond for security.

Free. No, no, thou hast given me thy face for security: any body wou'd swear thou dost not look like a cheat. You shall have what you will of me; and if your mother will not be kinder to you, come to me, who will.

Jer. By my fa——he's a curious fine gentleman!—— But will you stand by one? [*Aside.*

Free. If you can be resolute.

Jer. Can be resolv'd! Gad, if she gives me but a cross word, I'll leave her to night, and come to you. But now I have got money, I'll go to Jack-of-all-trades, at t'other end of the hall, and buy the neatest, purest things——

Free. And I'll follow the great boy, and my blow at his mother. Steal away the calf, and the cow will follow.

[*Exit Jerry followed by Freeman.*]

Enter on the other side, MANLY, Widow BLACKACRE, and OLDFOX.

Man. Damn your cause, can't you lose it without me? which you are like enough to do, if it be, as you say, an honest one: I will suffer no longer for't.

Wid. Nay, Captain, I tell you, you are my prime witness; and the cause is just now coming on, Mr Split-cause tells me. Lord, methinks you shou'd take a plea-

sure walking here, as half you see now do; for they have no business here, I assure you.

Man. Yes; but I'll assure you then, their business is to persecute me: but d'ye think I'll stay any longer, to have a rogue, because he knows my name, pluck me aside, and whisper a news-book secret to me with a stinking breath? a second come piping angry from the court, and sputter in my face his tedious complaints against it? A third law coxcomb, because he saw me once at a reader's dinner, come and put me a long law-case, to make a discovery of his indefatigable dullness, and my wearied patience? A fourth a most barbarous civil rogue, who will keep a man half an hour in the crowd with a bow'd body, and a hat off, acting the reform'd sign of the Salvation tavern, to hear his bountiful professions of service and friendship, whilst he cares not if I were damn'd, and I am willing him hang'd out of my way? I'd as soon run the gauntlope, as walk t'other turn.

Enter to them JERRY BLACKACRE, without his bags, but laden with trinkets, which he endeavours to hide from his mother, and follow'd at a distance by Freeman.

Wid. O, are you come, Sir? but where have you been, you afs? and how came you thus laden?

Fer. Look here, forsooth, Mother; now here's a duck, here's a boar cat, and here's an owl.

[Making a noise with cat-calls and other such like instruments.]

Wid. Yes, there is an owl, Sir.

Old. He's an ungracious bird indeed.

Wid. But go, thou trangame, and carry back those trangames, which thou hast stol'n or purloin'd; for no body wou'd trust a minor in Westminster-hall, sure.

Fer. Hold yourself contented, forsooth: I have these commodities by a fair bargain and sale; and there stands my witness and creditor.

Wid. How's that! what, Sir, d'ye think to get the mother, by giving the child a rattle? but where are my bags, my writings, you rascal?

Fer. O law! where are they, indeed?

[Aside.]

Wid. How, firrah! speak, come—

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Man. You can tell her, Freeman, I suppose.

[*Apart to him.*

Free. 'Tis true, I made one of your salt-water sharks steal 'em, whilst he was eagerly chusing his commodities, as he calls 'em, in order to my design upon his mother.

[*Apart to him.*

Wid. Won't you speak? where were you, I say, you son of a——an unfortunate woman? O Major, I'm undone; they are all that concern my estate, my jointure, my husband's deed of gift, my evidences for all my suits now depending! what will become of them?

Free. I'm glad to hear this. [*Aside.*] They'll be all safe I warrant you, Madam.

Wid. O, where? where? Come, you villain, along with me, and shew me where.

[*Exeunt* Widow, Jerry, Oldfox.

Manent MANLY, FREEMAN.

Man. Thou hast taken the right way to get a widow, by making her great boy rebel; for when nothing will make a widow marry, she'll do't to cross her children. But can'st thou in earnest marry this harpy, this volume of shrivel'd blurr'd parchments and law, this attorney's desk?

Free. Ay, ay; I'll marry and live honestly, that is, give my creditors, not her, due benevolence, pay my debts.

Man. Thy creditors, you see, 'are not so barbarous as to put thee in prison; and wilt thou commit thyself to a noisome dungeon for thy life? which is the only satisfaction thou canst give thy creditors by this match.

Free. Why, is she not rich?

Man. Ay, but he that marries a widow for her money, will find himself as much mistaken, as the widow that marries a young fellow for due benevolence, as you call it.

Free. Why, d'ye think I sha'nt deserve wages? I'll drudge faithfully.

Man. I tell thee again, he that is the slave in the mine, has the least propriety in the ore: you may dig and dig; but if thou wouldst have her money, rather get to be her trustee than her husband; for a true widow will make over her estate to any body, and cheat herself, rather than be cheated by her children, or a second husband.

Enter to them JERRY, running in a fright.

Jer. O law ! I'm undone, I'm undone ! my mother will kill me : you said you'd stand by one.

Free. So I will, my brave 'squire, I warrant thee.

Jer. Ay, but I dare not stay till she comes ; for she's as furious, now she has lost her writings, as a bitch when she has lost her puppies.

Man. The comparison's handsome !

Jer. O, she's here !

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, and OLDFOX.

Free. to the Sailor.] Take him, Jack, and make haste with him to your master's lodging ; and be sure you keep him up till I come. *[Exit Jerry and Sailor.]*

Wid. O my dear writings ! Where's this heathen rogue, my minor ?

Free. Gone to drown or hang himself.

Wid. No, I know him too well ; he'll ne'er be *felo de se* that way ; but he may go and chuse a guardian of his own head, and so be *felo de ses biens* ; for he has not yet chosen one.

Free. Say you so ? And he shan't want one. *[Aside.]*

Wid. But, now I think on't, 'tis you, Sir, have put this cheat upon me ; for there is a saying, *Take hold of a maid by her smock, and a widow by her writings, and they cannot get from you.* But I'll play fast and loose with you yet, if there be law, and my minor and writings are not forthcoming ; I'll bring my action of detainue or trover. But first, I'll try to find out this guardianless, graceless villain. Will you jog, Major ?

Man. If you have lost your evidence, I hope your causes cannot go on, and I may be gone ?

Wid. O no ; stay but a making-water while, as one may say, and I'll be with you again. *[Exit Wid. and Old.]*

Manent MANLY and FREEMAN.

Free. Well, sure I am the first man that ever began a love-intrigue in Westminster-Hall.

Man. No, sure ; for the love to a widow generally begins here : and as the widow's cause goes against the heir

or executors, the jointure rivals commence their suit to the widow.

Free. Well ; but how, pray, have you past your time here, since I was forced to leave you alone ? You have had a great deal of patience.

Man. Is this a place to be alone, or have patience in ? But I have had patience indeed ; for I have drawn upon me, since I came, but three quarrels, and two law-suits.

Free. Nay, faith, you are too curs'd to be let loose in the world : you shou'd be tied up again in your sea-kennel, call'd a ship. But how cou'd you quarrel here ?

Man. How cou'd I refrain ? A lawyer talk'd peremptorily and saucily to me, and as good as gave me the lie.

Free. They do it so often to one another at the bar, that they make no bonds on't elsewhere.

Man. However, I gave him a cuff on the ear ; where-upon he jogs two men, whose backs were turn'd to us (for they were reading at a bookseller's) to witness I struck him, sitting the court ; which office they so readily promis'd, that I call'd 'em rascals, and knights of the post. One of 'em presently calls two other absent witnesses, who were coming towards us at a distance ; whilst the other, with a whisper, desires to know my name, that he might have satisfaction by way of challenge, as t'other by way of writ ; but if it were not rather to direct his brother's writ, than his own challenge : there you see is one of my quarrels, and two of my law-suits.

Free. So !——and the other two ?

Man. For advising a poet to leave off writing, and turn lawyer, because he is dull and impudent, and says or writes nothing but by precedent.

Free. And the third quarrel ?

Man. For giving most sincere advice to a handsome, well-dress'd young fellow, who ask'd it too, not to marry a wench that he lov'd, and I had lain with.

Free. Nay, if you will be giving your sincere advice to lovers and poets, you will not fail of quarrels.

Man. Or if I stay in this place ; for I see more quarrels crowding upon me. Let's be gone, and avoid 'em.

Enter NOVEL at a distance, coming towards them.

A plague on him, that sneer is ominous to us ; he is coming upon us, and we shall not be rid of him.

No. Dear bully, don't look so grum upon me ; you told me just now, you had forgiven me a little harmless railery upon wooden legs last night.

Man. Yes, yes, pray be gone, I am talking of business.

No. Can't I hear it ? I love thee, and will be faithful, and always——

Man. Impertinent. 'Tis business that concerns Freeman only.

No. Well, I love Freeman too, and wou'd not divulge his secret : pr'ythee speak, pr'ythee, I must——

Man. Pr'ythee, let me be rid of thee, I must be rid of thee.

No. Faith thou canst hardly, I love thee so. Come, I must know the business.

Man. So, I have it now.

[*Aside.*

Why, if you needs will know it, he has a quarrel, and his adversary bids him bring two friends with him : now I am one, and we are thinking who we shall have for a third.

Several crossing the stage.

No. A pox, there goes a fellow owes me an hundred pound, and goes out of town to-morrow : I'll speak with him, and come to you presently.

[*Exit Novel.*

Man. No, but you won't.

Free. You are dextrously rid of him.

Enter OLDFOX.

Man. To what purpose, since here comes another, as impertinent ? I know, by his grin, he is bound hither.

Old. Your servant, worthy, noble Captain : well, I have left the widow, because she carried me from your company ; for, faith, Captain, I must needs tell thee, thou art the only officer in England, who was not an Edgehill officer, that I care for.

Man. I'm sorry for't.

Old. Why, would'st thou have me love them ?

Man. Any body, rather than me.

Old. What, you're modest, I see; therefore too I love thee.

Man. No, I am not modest; but love to brag myself, and can't patiently hear you fight over the last civil war. Therefore, go look out the fellow I saw just now here, that walks with his sword and stockings out at heels, and let him tell you the history of that scar on his cheek, to give you occasion to shew yours got in the field at Bloomsbury, not that of Edgehill. Go to him, poor fellow; he is fasting, and has not the happiness this morning to sink of brandy and tobacco: go, give him some to hear you; I am busy.

Old. Well, i'gad, I love thee now, boy, for thy furliness: thou art no tame captain, I see, that will suffer—

Man. An old fox.

Old. All that shan't make me angry: I consider that thou art peevish, and fretting at some ill success at law. Pr'ythee, tell me what ill luck you have met with here.

Man. You!

Old. Do I look like the picture of ill luck? Gadsmouns, I love thee more and more: and shall I tell thee what made me love thee first?

Man. Do; that I may be rid of that damn'd quality and thee.

Old. 'Twas thy wearing that broad sword there.

Man. Here, Freeman, let's change: I'll never wear it more.

Old. How! you won't sure. Pr'ythee, don't look like one of our holiday captains now-a-days, with a bodkin by your side, you martinet rogue.

Man. O then there's hopes.

[*Aside.*]

What, d'ye find fault with martinet? Let me tell you, Sir, 'tis the best exercise in the world: the most ready, most easy, most graceful exercise that ever was us'd, and the most——

Old. Nay, nay, Sir, no more; Sir, your servant: if you praise martinet once, I have done with you, Sir. Martinet! martinet!——

[*Exit Oldfox.*]

Free. Nay, you have made him leave you as willingly

as ever he did an enemy ; for he was truly for the king and parliament : for the parliament in their list ; and for the king, in cheating 'em of their pay, and never hurting the king's party in the field.

Enter a LAWYER towards them.

Man. A pox, this way ! Here's a lawyer I know threatening us with another greeting.

Law. Sir, Sir, your very servant ; I am afraid you had forgotten me.

Man. I was not afraid you had forgotten me.

Law. No, Sir ; we lawyers have pretty good memories.

Man. You ought to have, by your wits.

Law. O you are a very merry gentleman, Sir : I remember you were merry, when I was last in your company.

Man. I was never merry in thy company, Mr Lawyer, sure.

Law. Why, I'm sure you jok'd upon me, and sham'd me all night long.

Man. Sham'd ! pr'ythee, what barbarous law-term is that ?

Law. Sham'd ! why, don't you know that ? 'Tis all our way of wit, Sir.

Man. I am glad I do not know it then. Shamming ! What does he mean by't, Freeman ?

Free. Shamming, is telling you an insipid dull lie with a dull face, which the fly wag the author only laughs at himself ; and making himself believe 'tis a good jest, puts the sham only upon himself.

Man. So, your lawyer's jest, I find, like his practice, has more knavery than wit in't. I shou'd make the worst shammer in England : I must always deal ingenuously, as I will with you, Mr Lawyer, and advise you to be seen rather with attornies and solicitors, than such fellows as I am : they will credit your practice more.

Law. No, Sir, your company's an honour to me.

Man. No, faith ; go this way, there goes an attorney ; leave me for him : let it never be said a lawyer's civility did him hurt.

Law. No, worthy honour'd Sir ; I'll not leave you for any attorney, sure.

Man. Unless he had a fee in his hand.

Law. Have you any business here, Sir? Try me: I'd serve you sooner than any attorney breathing.

Man. Business—So, I have thought of a sure way. [*Afide.* Yes, faith I have a little business.

Law. Have you so, Sir: In what court, Sir? What is't, Sir? Tell me but how I may serve you, and I'll do't, Sir, and take it for as great an honour——

Man. Faith, 'tis for a poor orphan of a sea-officer of mine, that has no money; but if it cou'd be follow'd *in forma pauperis*, and when the legacy's recover'd——

Law. *Forma pauperis*, Sir!

Man. Ay, Sir.

Several crossing the stage.

Law. Mr Bumblecase, Mr Bumblecase; a word with you. Sir, I beg your pardon at present; I have a little business——

Man. Which is not *in forma pauperis*. [*Exit Law.*

Free. So, you have now found a way to be rid of people without quarrelling.

Enter ALDERMAN.

Man. But here's a city rogue will stick as hard upon us, as if I ow'd him money.

Ald. Captain, noble Sir, I am yours heartily, d'ye see: Why shou'd you avoid your old friends?

Man. And why shou'd you follow me? I owe you nothing.

Ald. Out of my hearty respects to you: for there is not a man in England——

Man. Thou wouldst save from hanging with the expence of a shilling only.

Ald. Nay, nay, but Captain, you are like enough to tell me——

Man. Truth, which you won't care to hear; therefore you had better go talk with somebody else.

Ald. No, I know nobody can inform me better of some young wit, or spendthrift, that has a good dipp'd seat and estate in Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Essex, or Kent; any

of these wou'd serve my turn : now, if you knew of such a one, and wou'd not help——

Man. You to finish his ruin.

Ald. I'faith, you shou'd have a snip——

Man. Of your nose, you thirty-in-the-hundred rascal ; wou'd you make me your squire-setter, your bawd for manors ?

[*Takes him by the nose.*]

Ald. Oh !

Free. Hold, or here will be your third law-suit.

Ald. Gads-precious ! you hectoring person you, are you wild ? I meant you no hurt, Sir : I begin to think, as things go, land-security best, and have, for a convenient mortgage, some ten, fifteen, or twenty thousand pound by me.

Man. Then go lay it out upon an hospital, and take a mortgage of heaven, according to your city custom ; for you think, by laying out a little money, to hook in that too hereafter : do, I say, and keep the poor you've made by taking forfeitures, that Heaven may not take yours.

Ald. No, to keep the cripples you make this war : this war spoils our trade.

Man. Damn your trade ; 'tis the better for't.

Ald. What, will you speak against our trade ?

Man. And dare you speak against the war, our trade ?

Ald. Well, he may be a convoy of ships I am concerned in.

[*Aside.*]

Come, Captain, I will have a fair correspondence with you, say what you will.

Man. Then prithee be gone.

Ald. No, faith : prithee, Captain, let's go drink a dish of lac'd coffee, and talk of the times : come, I'll treat you ; nay, you shall go, for I have no business here.

Man. But I have.

Ald. To pick up a man to give thee a dinner ? Come, I'll do thy business for thee.

Man. Faith, now I think on't, so you may, as well as any man ; for 'tis to pick up a man to be bound with me, to one who expects city-security for——

Ald. Nay then, your servant, Captain ; business must be done.

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Man. Ay, if it can : but hark you, Alderman, without you —

Ald. Business, Sir, I say, must be done ; and there's an officer of the treasury I have an affair with —

[*Several crossing the stage. Exit Alderman.*]

Man. You see now what the mighty friendship of the world is ; what all ceremony, embraces, and plentiful professions come to. You are no more to believe a professing friend, than a threatening enemy ; and as no man hurts you, that tells you he'll do you a mischief, no man, you see, is your servant who says he is so. Why the devil then should a man be troubled with the flattery of knaves, if he be not a fool or cully ? or with the fondness of fools, if he be not a knave or cheat ?

Free. Only for his pleasure ; for there is some in laughing at fools, and disappointing knaves.

Man. That's a pleasure, I think, wou'd cost you too dear, as well as marrying your widow to disappoint her. But, for my part, I have no pleasure by 'em but in despising 'em, wherefoe'er I meet 'em ; and then the pleasure of hoping so to be rid of 'em. But now my comfort is, I am not worth a shilling in the world, which all the world shall know ; and then I'm sure I shall have none of 'em come near me.

Free. A very pretty comfort, which I think you pay too dear for. But is the twenty pound gone since the morning ?

Man. To my boat's crew. Wou'd you have the poor, honest, brave fellows want ?

Free. Rather than you or I.

Man. Why, art thou without money ? thou who art a friend to every body ?

Free. I ventur'd my last stake upon the 'squire to nick him of his mother ; and cannot help you to a dinner, unless you will go dine with my Lord —

Man. No, no, the ordinary is too dear for me, where flattery must pay for my dinner : I am no herald or poet.

Free. We'll go then to the bishop's —

Man. There you must flatter the old philosophy : I cannot renounce my reason for a dinner.

Free. Why, then, let's go to your Alderman's.

Man. Hang him, rogue! that were not to dine; for he makes you drunk with lees of sack before dinner, to take away your stomach: and there you must call usury and extortion God's blessing, or the honest turning of the penny; hear him brag of the leather breeches in which he trotted first to the town, and make a greater noise with his money in his parlour, than his cashiers do in his counting-house, without hopes of borrowing a shilling.

Free. Ay, a pox on't, 'tis like dining with the great gamesters; and when they fall to their common desert, to see the heaps of gold drawn on all hands, without going to twelve. Let us go to my Lady Goodly's.

Man. There to flatter her looks: you must mistake her grandchildren for her own; praise her cook, that she may rail at him; and feed her dogs, not yourself.

Free. What d'ye think of eating with your lawyer then?

Man. Eat with him! damn him! To hear him employ his barbarous eloquence in reading upon the two-and-thirty good bits in a shoulder of veal; and be forc'd yourself to praise the cold bribe pye that stinks; and drink law-French wine, as rough and as harsh as his law-French. A pox on him! I'd rather dine in the Temple-grounds or walks, with the knights without noses, or the knights of the post, who are honestest fellows, and better company. But let us home, and try our fortune; for I'll stay no longer here for your damn'd widow.

Free. Well, let us go home then; for I must go for my damn'd widow, and look after my new damn'd charge. Three or four hundred years ago a man might have din'd in this hall.

Man. But now the lawyer only here is fed;
And, bully like, by quarrels gets his bread.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Manly's Lodgings.

Enter MANLY and FIDELIA.

MANLY.

WELL, there's success in thy face: hast thou prevailed? say.

Fid. As I cou'd wish, Sir.

Man. So! I told thee what thou wert fit for, and thou wou'dst not believe me. Come, thank me for bringing thee acquainted with thy genius. Well, hast thou mollified her heart for me?

Fid. No, Sir, not so; but what's better.

Man. How! what's better!

Fid. I shall harden your heart against her.

Man. Have a care, Sir; my heart is too much in earnest to be fool'd with, and my desire at height, and needs no delays to incite it: what, you are too good a pimp already, and know how to endear pleasure by withholding it? But leave off your page's bawdyhouse-tricks, Sir; and tell me, will she be kind?

Fid. Kinder than you cou'd wish, Sir.

Man. So then: well, prithee, what said she?

Fid. She said——

Man. What? thou art so tedious: speak comfort to me: what!

Fid. That of all things you are her aversion.

Man. How!

Fid. That she wou'd sooner take a bed-fellow out of an hospital, and diseases into her arms than you.

Man. What!

Fid. That she wou'd rather trust her honour with a dissolute debauch'd hector, nay worse, with a finical baffled coward, all over loathsome with affectation of the fine gentleman.

Man. What's all this you say!

Fid. Nay, that my offers of your love to her were more offensive, than when parents wooe their virgin-daughters to the enjoyment of riches only; and that you were in all circumstances as nauseous to her as a husband on compulsion.

Man. Hold! I understand you not.

Fid. So, 'twill work, I see.

[*Aside.*

Man. Did you not tell me——

Fid. She call'd you ten thousand ruffians.

Man. Hold, I say.

Fid. Brutes——

Man. Hold!

Fid. Sea monsters.

Man. Damn your intelligence! hear me a little now.

Fid. Nay, surly coward she call'd you too.

Man. Won't you hold yet? Hold, or——?

Fid. Nay, Sir, pardon me; I could not but tell you she had the baseness, the injustice to call you coward, Sir; coward, coward, Sir.

Man. Not yet?

Fid. I've done: coward, Sir.

Man. Did you not say, she was kinder than I could with her?

Fid. Yes, Sir.

Man. How then?——O!——I understand you now: at first she appear'd in rage and disdain; the truest sign of a coming woman; but at last you prevail'd, it seems, did you not?

Fid. Yes, Sir.

Man. So then; let's know that only: come, prithee, without delays. I'll kiss thee for that news before hand.

Fid. So! the kiss I'm sure is welcome to me, whatsoe'er the news will be to you.

[*Aside.*

Man. Come, speak, my dear volunteer.

Fid. How welcome were that kind word too, if it were not for another woman's sake!

[*Aside.*

Man. What, won't you speak? You prevail'd for me at last, you say?

Fid. No, Sir.

Man. No more of your fooling, Sir ; it will not agree with my impatience or temper.

Fid. Then, not to fool you, Sir, I spoke to her for you, but prevail'd for myself ; she wou'd not hear me when I spoke in your behalf, but bid me say what I wou'd in my own : tho' she gave me no occasion, she was so coming, and so was kinder, Sir, than you cou'd wish ; which I was only afraid to let you know, without some warning.

Man. How's this ? Young man, you are of a lying age ; but I must hear you out ; and if——

Fid. I would not abuse you, and cannot wrong her by any report of her, she is so wicked.

Man. How ! wicked ! had she the impudence, at the second sight of you only——

Fid. Impudence, Sir ! O she has impudence enough to put a court out of countenance, and debauch a stew.

Man. Why, what said she ?

Fid. Her tongue, I confess, was silent, but her speaking eyes gloted such things, more immodest and lascivious than ravishers can act, or women under a confinement think.

Man. I know there are those whose eyes reflect more obscenity than the glasses in alcoves ; but there are others too, who use a little art with their looks, to make 'em more beautiful, not more loving, which vain young fellows, like you, are apt to interpret in their own favour, and to the Lady's wrong.

Fid. Seldom, Sir. Pray have you a care of gloting eyes ; for he that loves to gaze upon 'em, will find at last a thousand fools and cuckolds in 'em instead of Cupids.

Man. Very well, Sir : but what, you had only eye-kindness from Olivia ?

Fid. I tell you again, Sir, no woman sticks there ; eye-promises of love they only keep ; nay, they are contracts which make you sure of 'em. In short, Sir, she seeing me, with shame and amazement, dumb, unactive, and resistless, threw her twisting arms about my neck, and smother'd me with a thousand tasteless kisses : believe me, Sir, they were so to me.

Man. Why did you not avoid 'em then ?

Fid. I fenced with her eager arms, as you did with the grapples of the enemy's fire-ship; and nothing but cutting 'em off cou'd have freed me.

Man. Damn'd, damn'd woman, that cou'd be so false and infamous! and damn'd, damn'd heart of mine, that cannot yet be false, tho' so infamous! What easy, tame, suffering, trampled things, does that little god of talking cowards make of us! but——

Fid. So! it works, I find, as I expected. [*Aside.*]

Man. But she was false to me before; she told me so herself, and yet I could not quite believe it; but she was, so that her second falseness is a favour to me, not an injury, in revenging me upon the man that wrong'd me first of her love. Her love! a whore's, a witch's love! —But what, did she not kiss well, Sir? I'm sure I thought her lips—but I must not think of 'em more—but yet they are such I cou'd still kiss—grow to—and then tear off with my teeth, grind 'em into mam-mocks, and spit 'em into her cuckold's face.

Fid. Poor man, how uneasy he is! I have hardly the heart to give so much pain, tho' withal I gave him a cure, and to myself new life. [*Aside.*]

Man. But what, her kisses sure cou'd not but warm you into desire at last, or a compliance with her's at least?

Fid. Nay, more, I confess——

Man. What more? speak.

Fid. All you cou'd fear had pass'd between us, if I cou'd have been made to wrong you, Sir, in that nature.

Man. Cou'd have been made! you lie, you did.

Fid. Indeed, Sir, 'twas impossible for me; besides, we were interrupted by a visit: but, I confess, she wou'd not let me stir till I promis'd to return to her again within this hour, as soon as it shou'd be dark; by which time she wou'd dispose of her visit, and her servants, and herself, for my reception; which I was fain to promise, to get from her.

Man. Ha!

Fid. But if ever I go near her again, may you, Sir, think me as false to you as she is; hate and renounce me as you ought to do her, and I hope will do now.

Man. Well, but now I think on't, you shall keep your

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word with your lady. What, a young fellow, and fail the first, nay, so tempting an assignation!

Fid. How, Sir?

Man. I say, you shall go to her when 'tis dark, and shall not disappoint her.

Fid. I, Sir! I shou'd disappoint her more by going, for—

Man. How so?

Fid. Her impudence and injustice to you will make me disappoint her love, loath her.

Man. Come, you have my leave; and if thou disgust her, I'll go with you, and act love, whilst you shall talk it only.

Fid. You, Sir! nay, then I'll never go near her. You act love, Sir! You must but act it indeed, after all I have said to you. Think of your honour, Sir; love!

Man. Well, call it revenge, and that is honourable: I'll be reveng'd on her; and thou shalt be my second.

Fid. Not in a base action, Sir, when you are your own enemy. O, go not near her, Sir, for Heaven's sake; for your own, think not of it!

Man. How concern'd you are! I thought I shou'd catch you. What, you are my rival at last, and are in love with her yourself; and have spoken ill of her out of your love to her, not me; and therefore wou'd not have me go to her?

Fid. Heaven witnesses for me, 'tis because I love you only I wou'd not have you go to her.

Man. Come, come, the more I think on't the more I'm satisfied you do love her: those kisses, young man, I knew were irresistible; 'tis certain.

Fid. There is nothing certain in the world, Sir, but my truth, and your courage.

Man. Your servant, Sir. Besides, false and ungrateful as she has been to me, and tho' I may believe her hatred to me as you report it, yet I cannot think you are so soon, and at that rate, belov'd by her, tho' you may endeavour it.

Fid. Nay, if that be all, and you doubt it still, Sir, I will conduct you to her; and unseen, your ears shall

judge of her falſeneſs and my truth to you, if that will ſatisfy you.

Man. Yes, there is ſome ſatisfaction in being quite out of doubt; becauſe 'tis that alone with-holds us from the pleaſure of revenge.

Fid. Revenge! what revenge can you have, Sir? Diſdain is beſt reveng'd by ſcorn; and faithleſs love by loving another, and making her happy with the other's loſings: which, if I might adviſe —

Enter FREEMAN.

Man. Not a word more.

Free. What, are you talking of love yet, Captain? I thought you had done with't.

Man. Why, what did you hear me ſay?

Free. Something imperfectly of love, I think.

Man. I was only wond'ring why fools, rascals, and deſertleſs wretches, ſhou'd ſtill have the better of men of merit with all women, as much as with their own common miſtreſs, Fortune.

Free. Becauſe moſt women, like Fortune, are blind, ſeem to do all things in jeſt, and take pleaſure in extravagant actions; their love deſerves neither thanks or blame, for they cannot help it: 'tis all ſympathy; therefore the noiſy, the ſinical, the talkative, the cowardly, and effeminate, have the better of the brave, the reaſonable, and man of honour; for they have no more reaſon in their love or kindneſs than Fortune herſelf.

Man. Yes, they have their reaſon: firſt, honour in a man they fear too much to love, and ſenſe in a lover upbraids their want of it; and they hate any thing that diſturbs their admiration of themſelves; but they are of that vain number, who had rather ſhew their falſe generoſity, in giving away profuſely to worthleſs flatterers, than in paying juſt debts. And in ſhort, all women, like fortune (as you ſay) and rewards, are loſt, by too much meriting.

Fid. All women, Sir! Sure there are ſome who have no other quarrels to a lover's merit but that it begets their deſpair of him.

Man. Thou art young enough to be credulous: but we—

Enter one SAILOR.

I Sai. Here are now below the scolding, daggled gentlewoman, and that Major Old—Old—fop, I think you call him.

Free. Oldfox; pr'ythee bid 'em come up, with your leave, Captain, for now I can talk with her upon the square, if I shall not disturb you.

Man. No, for I'll be gone. Come, Volunteer.

Free. Nay, pray stay; the scene between us will not be so tedious to you as you think: besides, you shall see how I rigg'd my 'squire out with the remains of my shipwreck'd wardrobe; he is under your sea valet de-chambre's hands, and by this time dress'd, and will be worth your seeing. Stay, and I'll fetch my fool.

Man. No, you know I cannot easily laugh; besides, my volunteer and I have business abroad

[*Exit Manly, Fidelia, on one side; Freeman on t'other.*]

Enter Major OLDFOX and Widow BLACKACRE.

Wid. What, no body here! did not the fellow say he was within.

Old. Yes, Lady; and he may be perhaps a little busy at present; but if you think the time long till he comes, [*unfolding papers*] I'll read you here some of the fruits of my leisure, the overflowings of my fancy and pen. (To value me right, she must know my parts.) [*Aside.*] Come——

Wid. No, no; I have reading work enough of my own in my bag, I thank you.

Old. Ay, law, Madam; but here's a poem, in blank verse, which I think a handsome declaration of one's passion.

Wid. O, if you talk of declarations, I'll shew you one of the prettiest penn'd things, which I mended too myself, you must know.

Old. Nay, Lady, if you have used yourself so much to the reading harsh law that you hate smooth poetry, here is a character for you of——

Wid. A character! nay, then I'll shew you my bill in Chancery here, that gives you such a character of my adversary, makes him as black——

Old. Pshaw! away, away, Lady. But if you think the character too long, here is an epigram, not above twenty lines, upon a cruel lady, who decreed her servant should hang himself to demonstrate his passion.

Wid. Decreed! if you talk of decreeing, I have such a decree here, drawn by the finest clerk——

Old. O Lady, Lady, all interruption, and no sense between us, as if we were lawyers at the bar! but I had forgot, Apollo and Littleton never lodge in a head together. If you hate verses, I'll give you a cast of my politics in prose; 'tis a letter to a friend in the country; which is now the way of all such sober, solid persons as myself, when they have a mind to publish their disgust to the times; tho' perhaps, between you and I, they have no friend in the country. And sure a politic, serious person, may as well have a feign'd friend in the country to write to, as an idle poet a feign'd mistress to write to. And so here's my letter to a friend, or no friend, in the country, concerning the late conjuncture of affairs, in relation to coffeehouses: or, the coffeeeman's case.

Wid. Nay, if your letter have a case in't, 'tis something; but first I'll read you a letter of mine to a friend in the country, call'd a *letter of attorney*.

Enter to them FREEMAN, and JERRY BLACKACRE in an old gaudy suit, and red breeches of Freeman's.

Old. What, interruption still! O the plague of interruption! worse to an author, than the plague of critics.

Wid. What's this I see, Jerry Blackacre, my minor, in red breeches! what, hast thou left the modest seemly garb of gown and cap for this? and have I lost all my good Inns of Chancery breeding upon thee then? and thou wilt go a breeding thyself from our Inn of Chancery and Westminster-hall, at coffeehouses, and ordinaries, playhouses, tennis-courts, and bawdyhouses.

Fer. Ay, ay, what then? perhaps I will; but what's that to you? Here's my guardian and tutor now, forsooth, that I am out of your huckster's hands.

Wid. How! thou hast not chosen him for thy guardian yet?

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Jer. No, but he has chosen me for his charge, and that's all one: and I'll do any thing he'll have me, and go all the world over with him; to ordinaries, and bawdyhouses, or any where else.

Wid. To ordinaries and bawdyhouses! Have a care, minor, thou wilt enfeeble there thy estate and body: do not go to ordinaries and bawdyhouses, good Jerry.

Jer. Why, how come you to know any ill by bawdyhouses? you never had any hurt by 'em, had you, forsooth? Pray hold yourself contented; if I do go where money and wenches are to be had, you may thank yourself; for you us'd me so unnaturally you wou'd never let me have a penny to go abroad with, nor so much as come near the garret where your maidens lay; nay, you wou'd not so much as let me play at Hotcockles with 'em, nor have any recreation with 'em, though one shou'd have kiss'd you behind, you were so unnatural a mother, so you were.

Free. Ay, a very unnatural mother, faith, 'squire.

Wid. But, Jerry, consider thou art yet but a minor; however, if thou wilt go home with me again, and be a good child, thou shalt see——

Free. Madam, I must have a better care of my heir under age, than so; I wou'd sooner trust him alone with a stale waitingwoman and a parson, than with his widow-mother, and her lover or lawyer.

Wid. Why, thou villain, part mother and minor! rob me of my child and my writings! But thou shalt find there's a law; and as in the case of ravishment of guard——Westminster the second.

Old. Young gentleman, 'squire, pray be rul'd by your mother and your friends.

Jer. Yes, I'll be rul'd by my friends, therefore not by my mother, so I won't: I'll chuse him for my guardian till I am of age; nay, may be, for as long as I live.

Wid. Wilt thou so, thou wretch? and when thou'rt of age, thou wilt sign, seal, and deliver too, wilt thou?

Jer. Yes, marry will I, if you go there too.

Wid. O do not squeeze wax, son; rather go to ordinaries, and bawdyhouses than squeeze wax: if thou dost

that, farewell the goodly manor of Blackacre, with all its woods, underwoods, and appurtenances whatever, Oh, oh!

[Weeps.]

Free. Come, Madam, in short, you see I am resolv'd to have a share in the estate, yours or your son's; if I cannot get you, I'll keep him, who is less coy, you find; but if you wou'd have your son again, you must take me too. Peace or war? love or law? you see my hostage is in my hand: I'm in possession.

Wid. Nay, if one of us must be ruin'd, e'en let it be him. By my body, a good one! did you ever know yet a widow marry or not marry for the sake of her child? I'd have you to know, Sir, I shall be hard enough for you both yet, without marrying you. If Jerry won't be rul'd by me—What say you, booby, will you be rul'd? speak.

Jer. Let one alone, can't you?

Wid. Wilt thou chuse him for guardian, whom I refuse for husband?

Jer. Ay, to chuse, I thank you.

Wid. And are all my hopes frustrated? shall I never hear thee put cases again to John the butler, or our vicar? never see thee amble the circuit with the judges? and hear thee in our town-hall, louder than the crier?

Jer. No, for I have taken my leave of lawyering and pettifogging.

Wid. Pettifogging! thou profane villain, hast thou so? pettifogging!—then you shall take your leave of me and your estate too; thou shalt be an alien to me and it for ever. Pettifogging!

Jer. O, but if you go there too, mother, we have the deeds and settlements; I thank you: wou'd you cheat me of my estate, i'fac?

Wid. No, no; I will not cheat your little brother Bob; for thou wert not born in wedlock.

Free. How's that?

Jer. How, what quirk has she got in her head now?

Wid. I say, thou canst not, shalt not inherit the Black-acre's estate.

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Fer. Why? why, forsooth? what d'ye mean, if you go there too?

Wid. Thou art but my base child: and, according to the law, canst not inherit it: nay, thou art not so much as a bastard eigne.

Fer. What, what? am I then the son of a whore, mother?

Wid. The law says——

Free. Madam, we know what the law says; but have a care what you say: do not let your passion to ruin your son ruin your reputation.

Wid. Hang reputation, Sir, am not I a widow? have no husband, nor intend to have any? nor wou'd you, I suppose, now have me for a wife. So I think now I'm reveng'd on my son and you, without marrying, as I told you.

Free. But consider, Madam.

Fer. What, have you no shame left in you, mother?

Wid. Wonder not at it, Major; 'tis often the poor press'd widow's case to give up her honour to save her jointure, and seem to be a light woman, rather than marry: as some young men, they say, pretend to have the filthy disease, and lose their credit with most women, to avoid the importunities of some. [*Aside to Oldtox.*]

Free. But one word with you, Madam.

Wid. No, no, Sir. Come, Major, let us make haste now to the prerogative court.

Old. But, Lady, if what you say be true, will you stigmatize your reputation on record? And, if it be not true, how will you prove it?

Wid. Pshaw! I can prove any thing: and for my reputation, know, Major, a wise woman will no more value her reputation in disinheriting a rebellious son of a good estate, than she wou'd in getting him to inherit an estate. [*Exit Widow and Oldtox.*]

Free. Madam——We must not let her go so, 'squire.

Fer. Nay, the devil can't stop her though, if she has a mind to't. But come, Bully-guardian, we'll go and advise with three attornies, two proctors, two solicitors, and a shrewd man of White Friars, neither attorney, proctor, or solicitor, but as pure a pimp to the law as any of 'em; and sure all they will be hard enough for her;

for I fear, Bully-guardian, you are too good a joker to have any law in your head.

Free. Thou'rt in the right on't, Squire, I understand no law, especially that against bastards, since I'm sure the custom is against that law; and more people get estates by being so than lose 'em. [*Exeunt.*]

The SCENE changes to Olivia's Lodging.

Enter Lord PLAUSIBLE, and BOY with a candle.

L. Pla. Little gentleman, your most obedient, faithful, humble servant: where, I beseech you, is that divine person, your noble lady?

Boy. Gone out, my Lord; but commanded me to give you this letter. [*Gives him a letter.*]

Enter to him NOVEL.

L. Pla. Which he must not observe. [*Aside. Puts it up.*]

No. Hey, Boy, where is thy lady?

Boy. Gone out, Sir; but I must beg a word with you.

[*Gives him a letter, and exit.*]

No. For me? So.

[*Puts up the letter.*]

Servant, servant, my Lord; you see the lady knew of your coming, for she is gone out.

L. Pla. Sir, I humbly beseech you not to censure the lady's good breeding: she has reason to use more liberty with me than with any other man.

No. How, Viscount, how?

L. Pla. Nay, I humbly beseech you, be not in choler; where there is most love, there may be most freedom.

No. Nay, then 'tis time to come to an *ecclaircissement* with you, and to tell you, you must think no more of this lady's love.

L. Pla. Why, under correction, dear Sir?

No. There are reasons, reasons, Viscount.

L. Pla. What, I beseech you, noble Sir?

No. Prithee, prithee, be not impertinent, my Lord; some of you lords are such conceited, well-assured, impertinent rogues——

L. Pla. And you noble wits are so full of shamming and drelling, one knows not where to have you seriously.

No. Well, you shall find me in bed with this lady one of these days.

L. Pla. Nay, I beseech you, spare the lady's honour; for her's and mine will be all one shortly.

No. Prithee, my Lord, be not an ass: dost thou think to get her from me; I have had such encouragements—

L. Pla. I have not been thought unworthy of 'em.

No. What, not like mine! Come to an éclaircissement, as I said.

L. Pla. Why, seriously then, she has told me, Viscountess sounded prettily.

No. And me, that Novel was a name she wou'd sooner change her's for than for any title in England

L. Pla. She has commended the softness and respectfulness of my behaviour.

No. She has prais'd the briskness of my raillery, of all things, man.

L. Pla. The sleepiness of my eyes she lik'd.

No. Sleepiness! dulness, dulness. But the fierceness of mine she ador'd.

L. Pla. The brightness of my hair she lik'd.

No. The brightness! no, the greasiness, I warrant. But the blackness and lustre of mine she admires.

L. Pla. The gentleness of my smile.

No. The subtilty of my leer.

L. Pla. The clearness of my complexion.

No. The redness of my lips.

L. Pla. The whiteness of my teeth.

No. My janty way of picking them.

L. Pla. The sweetness of my breath.

No. Ha, ha!—Nay, then she abus'd you, 'tis plain! for you know what Manly said. The sweetness of your pulvilio she might mean; but for your breath! Ha, ha, ha! Your breath is such, man, that nothing but tobacco can perfume; and your complexion nothing cou'd mend but the small-pox.

L. Pla. Well, Sir, you may please to be merry; but, to put you out of all doubt, Sir, she has receiv'd some jewels from me of value.

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No. And presents from me ; besides what I presented her jantily, by way of ombre, of three or four hundred pounds value, which I'm sure are the earnest pence for our love bargain.

L. Pla. Nay then, Sir, with your favour, and to make an end of all your hopes, look you there, Sir, she has writ to me——

No. How, how ! well, well, and so she has to me ; look you there—— [Deliver to each other their letters.

L. Pla. What's here ?

No. How's this ?

[Reads out.]

“ My dear Lord, you'll excuse me for breaking my
 “ word with you, since 'twas to oblige, not offend you ;
 “ for I am only gone abroad but to disappoint Novel,
 “ and meet you in the drawing-room, where I expect
 “ you with as much impatience as when I us'd to suffer
 “ Novel's visits, the most impertinent fop that ever af-
 “ fected the name of a wit, therefore not capable, I hope,
 “ to give you jealousy ; for, for your sake alone, you
 “ saw I renounc'd an old lover, and will do all the
 “ world. Burn the letter, but lay up the kindness of it
 “ in your heart, with your OLIVIA.”

Very fine ! but pray, let's see mine.

L. Pla. I understand it not ; but sure she cannot think so of me.

[Reads the other letter.]

Nov. Hum, ha !——Meet——for your sake——Hum !
 ——quitted an old lover——world——Burn——in your
 heart with your OLIVIA.

Just the same ; the names only alter'd.

L. Pla. Surely there must be some mistake, or somebody has abus'd her and us.

No Yes, you are abus'd, no doubt on't, my Lord ; but I'll to Whitehall, and see.

L. Pla. And I, where I shall find you are abus'd.

No. Where, if it be so, for our comfort, we cannot fail of meeting with fellow-sufferers enough ; for as Free-

man said of another, she stands in the drawing-room like the glass, ready for all comers, to set their gallantry by her: and like the glass too, lets no man go from her unsatisfied with himself. *[Exeunt ambo.]*

Enter OLIVIA and BOY.

Oli. Both here, and just gone?

Boy. Yes, Madam.

Oli. But are you sure neither saw you deliver the other a letter?

Boy. Yes, yes, Madam, I am very sure.

Oli. Go then to the Old Exchange, to Westminster, Holborn, and all the other places I told you of; I shall not need you these two hours: be gone, and take the candle with you, and be sure you leave word again below, I am gone out, to all that ask.

Boy. Yes, Madam. *[Exit.]*

Oli. And my new lover will not ask, I'm sure; he has his lesson, and cannot miss me here, though in the dark: which I have purposely design'd, as a remedy against my blushing gallant's modesty: for young lovers, like gamecocks, are made bolder by being kept without light.

Enter her husband VERNISH, as from a journey.

Ver. Where is she? Darkness every where! *[Softly.]*

Oli. What, come before your time? My soul, my life! your haste has augmented your kindness; and let me thank you for it thus and thus——

[Embracing and kissing him.]

And tho', my soul, the little time since you left me has seem'd an age to my impatience, sure it is yet but seven——

Ver. How! who's that you expected after seven?

Oli. Ha! my husband return'd! and have I been throwing away so many kind kisses on my husband, and wrong'd my lover already? *[Aside.]*

Ver. Speak, I say, who was't you expected after seven?

Oli. What shall I say?——Oh—— *[Aside.]*
Why, 'tis but seven days, is it, dearest, since you went out of town? and I expected you not so soon.

Ver. No sure; 'tis but five days since I left you.

Oli. Pardon my impatience, dearest, I thought 'em seven at least.

Ver. Nay then——

Oli. But, my life, you shall never stay half so long from me again; you shan't indeed, by this kiss you shan't.

Ver. No, no; but why alone in the dark?

Oli. Blame not my melancholy in your absence——But my soul, since you went, I have strange news to tell you: Manly is return'd.

Ver. Manly return'd! Fortune forbid.

Oli. Met with the Dutch in the channel, fought, sunk his ship, and all he carried with him. He was here with me yesterday.

Ver. And did you own our marriage to him?

Oli. I told him I was married, to put an end to his love and my trouble; but to whom, is yet a secret kept from him and all the world: and I have us'd him so scurvily, his great spirit will ne'er return to reason it farther with me: I have sent him to sea again, I warrant.

Ver. 'Twas bravely done. And sure he will now hate the shore more than ever, after so great a disappointment. Be you sure only to keep a while our great secret, till he be gone: in the mean time I'll lead the easy honest fool by the nose, as I us'd to do; and whilst he stays, rail with him at thee; and when he's gone, laugh with thee at him. But have you his cabinet of jewels safe? part not with a seed-pearl to him, to keep him from starving.

Oli. Nor from hanging.

Ver. He cannot recover 'em; and, I think, will scorn to beg 'em again.

Oli. But, my life, have you taken the thousand guineas he left in my name, out of the goldsmith's hands?

Ver. Ay, ay; they are removed to another goldsmith's.

Oli. Ay, but, my soul, we had best have a care he find not where the money is; for his present wants (as I'm inform'd) are such, as will make him inquisitive enough.

Ver. You say true, and he knows the man too; but I'll remove it to-morrow.

Oli. To-morrow! O, do not stay till to-morrow: go to-night, immediately.

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Ver. Now I think on't, you advise well, and I will go presently.

Oli. Presently ! instantly : I will not let you stay a jot.

Ver. I will then, tho' I return not home till twelve.

Oli. Nay, tho' not till morning, with all my heart. Go, dearest ; I am impatient till you are gone——

[Thrusts him out.]

So, I have at once now brought about those two grateful businesses which all prudent women do together, secured money and pleasure ; and now all interruptions of the last are remov'd. Go, husband ; and come up, friend : just the buckets in the well ; the absence of one brings the other. But I hope, like them too, they will not meet in the way, jostle, and clash together.

Enter FIDELIA, and MANLY treading softly, and staying behind at some distance.

So, are you come ? (but not the husband-bucket, I hope, again) Who's there ? My dearest ?

Fid. My life——

Oli. Right, right : where are thy lips ? Here, take the dumb and best welcomes, kisses and embraces ; 'tis not a time for idle words. In a duel of love, as in others, parlying shews basely. Come, we are alone ; and now the word is only satisfaction, and defend not thyself.

Man. How's this ? Why, she makes love like a devil in a play ; and in this darkness, which conceals her angel's face, if I were apt to be afraid, I shou'd think her a devil.

[Aside.]

Oli. What, you traverse ground, young gentleman !

[Fidelia avoiding her.]

Fid. I take breath only.

Man. Good Heavens ! how was I deceiv'd ! *[Aside.]*

Oli. Nay, you are a coward : what ! are you afraid of the fierceness of my love ?

Fid. Yes, Madam, lest its violence might presage its change ; and I must needs be afraid you wou'd leave me quickly, who cou'd desert so brave a gentleman as Manly.

Oli. O name not his name ! for in a time of stolen joys,

as this is, the filthy name of husband were not a more allaying sound.

Man. There's some comfort yet.

[*Aside.*

Fid. But did you not love him?

Ol. Never. How cou'd you think it?

Fid. Because he thought it; who is a man of that sense, nice discerning, and diffidency, that I shou'd think it hard to deceive him.

Ol. No; he that distrusts most the world, trusts most to himself, and is but the more easily deceiv'd, because he thinks he cannot be deceiv'd: his cunning is like the coward's sword, by which he is oftener worsted than defended.

Fid. Yet, sure, you us'd no common art to deceive him.

Ol. I knew he lov'd his own singular moroseness so well as to dote upon any copy of it; wherefore I feign'd an hatred to the world too, that he might love me in earnest; but, if it had been hard to deceive him, I'm sure 'twere much harder to love him; a dogged, ill-manner'd—

Sl. D'ye hear, Sir? pray, hear her. [*Aside to Man.*

Ol. Surly, untractable, snarling brute! He! a mastiff dog were as fit a thing to make a gallant of.

Man. Ay, a goat or monkey were fitter for thee. [*Aside.*

Fid. I must confess, for my part, (tho' my rival) I cannot but say he has a manly handsomeness in his face and mien.

Ol. So has a Saracen in the sign.

Fid. Is proper and well made.

Ol. As a drayman.

Fid. Has wit.

Ol. He rails at all mankind.

Fid. And undoubted courage.

Ol. Like the hangman's; can murder a man when his hands are ty'd. He has cruelty indeed; which is no more courage, than his railing is wit.

Man. Thus women, and men like women, are too hard for us, when they think we do not hear 'em; and reputation, like other mistresses, is never true to a man in his absence.

[*Aside.*

Fid. He is——

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Oli. Prithee, no more of him : I thought I had satisfy'd you enough before, that he could never be a rival for you to apprehend : and you need not be more assur'd of my aversion to him, than by the last testimony of my love to you, which I am ready to give you. Come, my soul, this way—— [Pulls Fid.

Fid. But, Madam, what could make you dissemble love to him, when 'twas so hard a thing for you ; and flatter his love to you ?

Oli. That which makes all the world flatter and dissemble, 'twas his money : I had a real passion for that. Yet I lov'd not that so well, as for it to take him ; for as soon as I had his money, I hastened his departure, like a wife, who, when she has made the most of a dying husband's breath, pulls away his pillow.

Man. Damn'd money ! It's master's potent rival still ; and like a saucy pimp, corrupts itself the mistress it procures for us. [Aside.

Oli. But I did not think with you, my life, to pass my time in talking. Come hither, come ; yet stay, till I have lock'd a door in the other room, that may chance to let us in some interruption ; which reciting poets, or losing gamesters fear not more than I at this time do.

[Exit Olivia.

Fid. Well, I hope you are now satisfy'd, Sir, and will be gone to think of your revenge ?

Man. No, I am not satisfy'd ; and must stay to be reveng'd.

Fid. How, Sir ? You'll use no violence to her, I hope, and forfeit your own life, to take away her's ? That were no revenge.

Man. No, no, you need not fear : my revenge shall only be upon her honour, not her life.

Fid. How, Sir, her honour ! O Heavens ! consider, Sir, she has no honour. D'ye call that revenge ? can you think of such a thing ? But reflect, Sir, how she hates and loaths you.

Man. Yes, so much she hates me, that it wou'd be a revenge sufficient to make her accessory to my pleasure, and then let her know it.

Fid. No, Sir, no ; to be reveng'd on her now, were to disappoint her. Pray, Sir, let us be gone. [*Pulls Manly*

Man. Hold off. What, you are my rival then ! and therefore you shall stay, and keep the door for me, whilst I go in for you ; but, when I'm gone, if you dare to stir off from this very board, or breathe the least murmuring accent, I'll cut her throat first ; and if you love her, you will not venture her life ; nay, then I'll cut your throat too ; and I know you love your own life at least.

Fid. But, Sir ; good Sir.

Man. Not a word more, lest I begin my revenge on her by killing you.

Fid. But are you sure 'tis revenge that makes you do this ? How can it be ?

Man. Whist.

Fid. 'Tis a strange revenge, indeed.

Man. If you make me stay, I shall keep my word, and begin with you. No more.

[*Exit Manly at the same door Olivia went.*

Manet FIDELIA.

Fid. O Heavens ! is there not punishment enough
In loving well, if you will have't a crime,
But you must add fresh torments daily to't,
And punish us like peevish rivals still,
Because we fain wou'd find a heaven here !
But oid there ever any love like me,
That untry'd tortures you must find me out ?
Others, at worst, you force to kill themselves ;
But I must be self-murders of my love,
Yet will not grant the pow'r to end my life,
My cruel life ; for when a lover's hopes
Are dead and gone, life is unmerciful. [*Sits down and weeps.*

Enter MANLY to her.

Man. I have thought better on't : I must not discover myself now I am without witnesses ; for if I barely shou'd publish it, she wou'd deny it with as much impudence, as she wou'd act it again with this young fellow here. Where are you ?

Fid. Here—oh—now I suppose we may be gone.

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Man. I will; but not you: you must stay, and act the second part of a lover, that is, talk kindness to her.

Fid. Not I, Sir.

Man. No disputing, Sir, you must: 'tis necessary to my design of coming again to-morrow night.

Fid. What, can you come again then hither?

Man. Yes; and you must make the appointment, and an apology for your leaving her so soon; for I have said not a word to her; but have kept your counsel, as I expect you shou'd do mine. Do this faithfully, and I promise you here, you shall run my fortune still, and we will never part as long as we live; but if you do not do it, expect not to live.

Fid. 'Tis hard, Sir; but such a consideration will make it easier. You won't forget your promise, Sir?

Man. No, by Heavens. But I hear her coming. [*Exit.*

Enter OLIVIA to FIDELIA.

Oli. Where is my life? Run from me already! You do not love me, dearest; nay, you are angry with me, for you wou'd not so much as speak a kind word to me within: What was the reason?

Fid. I was transported too much.

Oli. That's kind: but come, my soul, what makes you here? Let us go in again; we may be surpris'd in this room, 'tis so near the stairs.

Fid. No, we shall hear the better here, if any body shou'd come up.

Oli. Nay, I assure you, we shall be secure enough within: come, come——

Fid. I am sick, and troubled with a sudden dizziness; cannot stir yet.

Oli. Come, I have spirits within.

Fid. O!—don't you hear a noise, Madam?

Oli. No, no; there is none: come, come. [*Pulls Fid.*

Fid. Indeed there is; and I love you so much, I must have a care of your honour, if you won't, and go; but to come to you to-morrow night, if you please.

Oli. With all my soul; but you must not go yet: come, pr'ythee.——

Fid. Oh!—I'm now sicker, and am afraid of one of my fits.

Oli. What fits?

Fid. Of the falling-sickness; and I ly generally an hour in a trance: therefore, pray consider your honour, for the sake of my love, and let me go, that I may return to you often.

Oli. But will you be sure then to come to-morrow night?

Fid. Yes.

Oli. Swear.

Fid. By our past kindness.

Oli. Well, go your ways then, if you will, you naughty creature you. *[Exit Fidelia.]*

These young lovers, with their fears and modesty, make themselves as bad as old ones to us; and I apprehend their bathfulness more than their tattling.

FIDELIA returns.

Fid. O Madam, we're undone! There was a gentleman upon the stairs, coming up with a candle, which made me retire. Look you, here he comes.

Enter VERNISH, and his Man with a light.

Oli. How! my husband! Oh! undone indeed! this way. *[Exit.]*

Ver. Ha! you shall not escape me so, Sir. *[Stops Fid.]*

Fid. O Heavens! more fears, plagues, and torments yet in store! *[Aside.]*

Ver. Come, Sir, I guess what your business was here; but this must be your business now. Draw. *[Draws.]*

Fid. Sir——

Ver. No expostulations: I shall not care to hear of't. Draw.

Fid. Good Sir.

Ver. How, you rascal! not courage to draw; yet durst do me the greatest injury in the world: thy cowardice shall not save thy life. *[Offers to run at Fid.]*

Fid. O hold, Sir, and send but your servant down, and I'll satisfy you, Sir, I cou'd not injure you as you imagine.

Ver. Leave the light, and be gone. *[Exit Servant.]*
Now, quickly, Sir, what have you to say, or——

Fid. I am a woman, Sir, a very unfortunate woman,

Ver. How ! A very handsome woman, I'm sure then : Here are witnesses of't too, I confess——

[Pulls off her peruke, and feels her breasts.]

Well, I'm glad to find the tables turn'd ; my wife is in more danger of cuckolding than I was. *[Aside.]*

Fid. Now, Sir, I hope you are so much a man of honour, as to let me go ; now I have satisfied you, Sir.

Ver. When you have satisfied me, Madam, I will.

Fid. I hope, Sir, you are too much a gentleman, to urge those secrets from a woman which concern her honour ; you may guess my misfortune to be love by my disguise ; but a pair of breeches cou'd not wrong you, Sir.

Ver. I may believe love has chang'd your outside, which cou'd not wrong me ; but why did my wife run away ?

Fid. I know not, Sir ; perhaps because she wou'd not be forc'd to discover me to you, or to guide me from your suspicions, that you might not discover me yourself ; which un-gentleman-like curiosity I hope you will cease to have, and let me go.

Ver. Well, Madam, if I must not know who you are, 'twill suffice for me only to know certainly what you are ; which you must not deny me. Come, there is a bed within, the proper rack for lovers : and if you are a woman, there you can keep no secrets ; you'll tell me all there unask'd. Come. *[Pulls her.]*

Fid. Oh ! what d'ye mean ? Help, oh——

Ver. I'll shew you ; but 'tis in vain to cry out : no one dares help you ; for I am lord here.

Fid. Tyrant here ! but if you are master of this house, which I have taken for a sanctuary, do not violate it yourself.

Ver. No, I'll preserve you here, and nothing shall hurt you, and will be as true to you as your disguise ; but you must trust me then. Come, come. *[Pulls her.]*

Fid. Oh ! oh ! rather than you shou'd drag me to a deed so horrid and so shameful, I'll die here a thousand deaths : but you do not look like a ravisher, Sir.

Ver. Nor you like one wou'd put me to't ; but if you will——

Fid. Oh ! oh ! Help ! help !——

Enter SERVANT.

Ver. You saucy rascal, how durst you come in? When you heard a woman squeak, that thou'd have been your cue to shut the door.

Ser. I come, Sir, to let you know the Alderman coming home immediately after you were at his house, has sent his cashier with the money, according to your note.

Ver. Damn his money: money never came to any sure unseasonable till now. Bid him stay.

Ser. He says, he cannot a moment.

Ver. Receive it you then.

Ser. He says he must have your receipt for it: he is in haste, for I hear him coming up, Sir.

Ver. Damn him. Help me in here then with this dishonourer of my family.

Fid. Oh! oh!

Ser. You say she is a woman, Sir.

Ver. No matter, Sir: must you prate!

Fid. Oh Heavens! is there——

[They thrust her in, and lock the door.]

Ver. Stay there, my prisoner; you have a short relieve.

I'll fetch the gold, and that we can't resist,

For with a full hand 'tis we ravish best. *[Exeunt]*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter OLIVIA and ELIZA.

OLIVIA.

AH, Cousin, nothing troubles me, but that I have given the malicious world its revenge, and reason now to talk as freely of me, as I us'd to do of it.

Eliz. Faith, then let not that trouble you; for to be plain, Cousin, the world cannot talk worse of you, than it did before.

Oli. How, Cousin? I'd have you to know, before this *faux pas*, this trip of mine, the world could not talk of me.

Eliz. Only that you mind other people's actions so much,

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that you take no care of your own, but to hide 'em; that, like a thief, because you know yourself most guilty, you impeach your fellow-criminals first, to clear yourself.

Oli. O wicked world!

Eliz. That you pretend an aversion to all mankind in public, only that their wives and mistresses may not be jealous, and hinder you of their conversation in private.

Oli. Bafe world!

Eliz. That abroad, you fasten quarrels upon innocent men, for talking of you, only to bring 'em to ask your pardon at home, and to become dear friends with them, who were hardly your acquaintance before.

Oli. Abominable world!

Eliz. That you condemn the obscenity of modern plays, only that you may not be censur'd for never missing the most obscene of the old ones.

Oli. Damn'd world!

Eliz. That you deface the nudities of pictures, and little statues, only because they are not real.

Oli. O, fy, fy, fy! hideous, hideous! Cousin, the obscenity of their censures makes me bluth.

Eliz. The truth of 'em the naughty world wou'd say now.

Enter LETTICE hastily.

Let. O, Madam! here is that gentleman coming up, who now you say is my master.

Oli. O, Cousin, whither shall I run? Protect me, or——

[Olivia runs away, and stands at a distance.]

Enter VERNISH.

Ver. Nay, nay, come——

Oli. O, Sir, forgive me.

Ver. Yes, yes, I can forgive you being alone in the dark with a woman in man's clothes; but have a care of a man in women's clothes.

Oli. What does he mean? he dissembles, only to get me into his power: or has my dear friend made him believe he was a woman? My husband may be deceiv'd by him, but I'm sure I was not. *[Aside.]*

Ver. Come, come, you need not have lain out of your house for this; but perhaps you were afraid, when I was

warm with suspicions, you must have discover'd who she was : and, prithee, may not I know it ?

Oli. She was—(I hope he has been deceiv'd : and since my lover has play'd the card, I must not renounce.) [*Aside.*

Ver. Come, what's the matter with thee ? If I must not know who she is, I'm satisfied without. Come hither.

Oli. Sure you do know her ; she has told you herself, I suppose.

Ver. No, I might have known her better, but that I was interrupted by the goldsmith, you know, and was forc'd to lock her into your chamber, to keep her from his sight ; but, when I return'd, I found she was got away, by tying the window-curtains to the balcony, by which she slid down into the street : for, you must know, I jested with her, and made her believe I'd ravish her ; which she apprehended, it seems, in earnest.

Oli. Then she got from you ?

Ver. Yes.

Oli. And is quite gone ?

Ver. Yes.

Oli. I'm glad on't—otherwise you had ravish'd her, Sir ? But how durst you go so far, as to make her believe you wou'd ravish her ? Let me understand that, Sir. What, there's guilt in your face, you blush too : nay, then you did ravish her, you did, you base fellow. What, ravish a woman in the first month of our marriage ! 'tis a double injury to me, thou base, ungrateful man ! wrong my bed already, villain ! I cou'd tear out those false eyes, barbarous unworthy wretch.

Eliz. So, so !——

Ver. Prithee hear me, my dear.

Oli. I will never hear you, my plague, my torment.

Ver. I swear——prithee hear me.

Oli. I have heard already too many of your false oaths and vows, especially your last in the church. O wicked man ! and wretched woman that I was ! I wish I had then sunk down into a grave, rather than to have given you my hand, to be led to your loathsome bed. Oh——
oh——

[*Seems to weep.*

Ver. So, very fine ! just a marriage-quarrel ! which tho'

it generally begins by the wife's fault, yet, in the conclusion, it becomes the husband's; and, whosoever offends at first, he only is sure to ask pardon at last. My dear—

Oli. My devil——

Ver. Come, prithee be appeas'd and go home; I have bespoken our supper betimes: for I cou'd not eat, till I found you. Go, I'll give you all kind of satisfactions; and one, which uses to be a reconciling one, two hundred of those guineas I receiv'd last night, to do what you will with.

Oli. What, wou'd you pay me for being your bawd?

Ver. Nay, prithee no more; go, and I'll thoroughly satisfy you when I come home; and then, too, we will have a fit of laughter at Manly, whom I am going to find at the Cock in Bowstreet, where I hear he din'd. Go, dearest, go home.

Eliz. A very pretty turn, indeed, this! [*Aside.*]

Ver. Now, Cousin, since by my wife I have that honour and privilege of calling you so, I have something to beg of you too; which is not to take notice of our marriage to any whatever yet a while, for some reasons very important to me: and next, that you will do my wife the honour to go home with her; and me the favour, to use that power you have with her, in our reconciliation.

Eliz. That I dare promise, Sir, will be no hard matter. Your Servant. [*Exit Vernish.*]

Well, Cousin, this I confess was reasonable hypocrisy, you were the better for't.

Oli. What hypocrisy?

Eliz. Why, this last deceit of your husband was lawful, since in your own defence.

Oli. What deceit? I'd have you to know, I never deceiv'd my husband.

Eliz. You do not understand me, sure; I say, this was an honest come off, and a good one: but 'twas a sign your gallant had had enough of your conversation, since he cou'd so dextrously cheat your husband in passing for a woman.

Oli. What d'ye mean, once more, with my gallant, and passing for a woman?

Eliz. What do you mean? You see your husband took him for a woman.

Oli. Whom?

Eliz. Hey-day! why, the man he found you with, for whom last night you were so much afraid; and who you told me——

Oli. Lord, you rave sure!

Eliz. Why, did not you tell me last night——

Oli. I know not what I might tell you last night, in a fright.

Eliz. Ay, what was that fright for? For a woman? Besides, were you not afraid to see your husband just now? I warrant only for having been found with a woman! nay, did you not just now too own your false step, or trip, as you call'd it? which was with a woman too! fy, this fooling is so insipid, 'tis offensive.

Oli. And fooling with my honour will be more offensive. Did you not hear my husband say, he found me with a woman in man's cloaths? and d'ye think he does not know a man from a woman?

Eliz. Not so well, I'm sure, as you do; therefore I'd rather take your word.

Oli. What, you grow scurrilous, and are I find more censorious than the world: I must have a care of you, I see.

Eliz. No, you need not fear yet, I'll keep your secret.

Oli. My secret! I'd have you to know, I have no need of confidants, though you value yourself upon being a good one.

Eliz. O admirable confidence! you shew more in denying your wickedness, than other people in glorying in't.

Oli. Confidence, to me! such language! nay, then, I'll never see your face again. [I'll quarrel with her, that people may never believe I was in her pow'r, but take for malice all the truth she may speak against me. *Aside.*] Lettice, where are you? Let us be gone from this censorious ill woman.

Eliz. Nay, thou shalt stay a little, to damn thyself quite. [*Aside.*] One word first, pray, Madam; can you swear, that whom your husband found you with——

Oli. Swear! ay, that whosoever 'twas that stole up,

unknown, into my room, when 'twas dark, I know not, whether man or woman, by heavens, by all that's good; or, may I never more have joys here, or in the other world: nay, may I eternally——

Eliz. Be damn'd. So, so, you are damn'd enough already by your oaths; and I enough confirm'd; and now you may please to be gone. Yet take this advice with you, in this plain-dealing age, to leave off forswearing yourself; for when people hardly think the better of a woman for her real modesty, why should you put that great contrainst upon yourself to feign it?

Oli. O hideous! hideous advice! let us go out of the hearing of it: she will spoil us, Lettice.

[*Exeunt Oli. and Let. at one door, Eliz. at t'other.*]

S C E N E *changes to the Cock in Bowstreet.*

A table and bottles.

MANLY and FIDELIA.

Man. How! sav'd her honour, by making her husband believe you were a woman! 'twas well, but hard enough to do, sure.

Fid. We were interrupted before he could contradict me.

Man. But can't you tell me, d'ye say, what kind of man he was?

Fid. I was so frightened, I confess, I can give no other account of him, but that he was pretty tall, round-faced, and one, I'm sure, I had ne'er seen before.

Man. But she, you say, made you swear to return to-night?

Fid. But I have since sworn, never to go near her again; for the husband would murder me, or worse, if he caught me again.

Man. No, I will go with you, and defend you to-night; and then I'll swear too, never to go near her again.

Fid. Nay, indeed, Sir, I will not go to be accessory to your death too: besides, what should you go again, Sir, for?

Man. No disputing, or advice, Sir; you have reason to know I am unalterable. Go therefore presently, and write her a note, to enquire if her assignation with you

holds; and if not to be at her own house, where else; and be importunate to gain admittance to her to-night. Let your messenger, ere he deliver your letter, enquire first, if her husband be gone out. Go, 'tis now almost six of the clock, I expect you back here before seven, with leave to see her then. Go, do this dextrously, and expect the performance of my last night's promise, never to part with you.

Fid. Ay, Sir; but will you be sure to remember that?

Man. Did I ever break my word? Go, no more replies or doubts. *[Exit Fidelia.]*

Enter FREEMAN to MANLY.

Where hast thou been?

Free. In the next room, with my Lord Plausible and Novel.

Man. Ay, we came hither, because it was a private house; but with thee indeed no house can be private, for thou hast that pretty quality of the familiar fops of the town, who in an eating house always keep company with all people in't, but those they came with.

Free. I went into their room, but to keep them, and my own fool the 'squire, out of your room; but you shall be peevish now, because you have no money: but why the devil won't you write to those we were speaking of? since your modesty, or your spirit, will not suffer you to speak to 'em, to lend you money, why won't you try 'em at last that way?

Man. Because I know 'em already, and can bear want better than denials, nay, than obligations.

Free. Deny you! they cannot: all of 'em have been your intimate friends.

Man. No, they have been people only I have oblig'd particularly.

Free. Very well; therefore you ought to go to 'em the rather, sure.

Man. No, no; those you have oblig'd most, most certainly avoid you, when you can oblige 'em no longer; and they take your visits like so many duns;—friends, like mistresses, are avoided for obligations past.

Free. Plhaw, but most of 'em are your relations; men of great fortune and honour.

Man. Yes; but relations have so much honour, as to think poverty taints the blood; and disown their wanting kindred; believing, I suppose, that as riches at first make a gentleman, the want of 'em degrades him. But damn 'em, now I'm poor, I'll anticipate their contempt, and disown them.

Free. But you have many a female acquaintance, whom you have been liberal to, who may have a heart to refund to you a little, if you wou'd ask it; they are not all Olivias.

Man. Damn thee! how couldst thou think of such a thing? I wou'd as soon rob my footman of his wages. Besides, 'twere in vain too: for a wench is like a box in an ordinary, receives all people's money easily, but there's no getting, nay, shaking any out again; and he that fills it, is sure never to keep the key.

Free. Well, but noble Captain, would you make me believe that you, who know half the town, have so many friends, and have oblig'd so many, can't borrow fifty or an hundred pounds?

Man. Why, noble Lieutenant, you who know all the town, and call all you know friends, methinks should not wonder at it; since you find ingratitude too: for how many lords families (though descended from blacksmiths or tinkers) hatt thou call'd great and illustrious? how many ill tables call'd good eating? how many noisy coxcombs, wits? how many pert couching cowards, stout? how many tawdry affected rogues, well drets'd? how many perukes admir'd? and how many ill verses applauded? and yet canst not borrow a miling: dost thou expect I, who always spoke truth, should?

Free. Nay, now you think you have paid me; but hark you, Captain, I heard of a thing call'd grinning honour, but never of starving honour.

Man. Well, but it has been the fate of some brave men: and if they won't give me a ship again, I can go starve any where with a musket on my shoulder.

Free. Give you a ship! why, you will not sollicit it.

Man. If I have not solicited it by my services, I know no other way.

Free. Your servant, Sir; nay, then I'm satisfied, I must solicit my widow the closer, and run the desperate fortune of matrimony on shore. [Exit.

Enter to MANLY, VERNISH.

Man. How!—Nay, here is a friend, indeed; and he that has him in his arms, can know no wants.

[Embraces Vernish.

Ver. Dear Sir! and he that is in your arms, is secure from all fears whatever; nay, our nation is secure by your defeat at sea, and the Dutch that fought against you, have prov'd enemies to themselves only, in bringing you back to us.

Man. Fy, fy! this from a friend? and yet from any other 'twere unsufferable: I thought I thou'd never have taken any thing ill from you.

Ver. A friend's privilege is to speak his mind, though it be taken ill.

Man. But your tongue need not tell me you think too well of me: I have found it from your heart, which spoke in actions, your unalterable heart. But Olivia is false, my friend, which I suppose is no news to you.

Ver. He's in the right on't. *[Aside.*

Man. But couldst thou not keep her true to me?

Ver. Not for my heart, Sir.

Man. But could you not perceive it at all before I went? could she so deceive us both?

Ver. I must confess, the first time I knew it, was three days after your departure, when she receiv'd the money you had left in Lombard-street, in her name; and her tears did not hinder her, it seems, from counting that. You wou'd trust her with all, like a true generous lover.

Man. And she like a mean juling—

Ver. Traiterous—

Man. Base—

Ver. Damn'd—

Man. Covetous—

Ver. Mercenary whore——

I can hardly hold from laughing.

[*Aside.*

Man. Ay, a mercenary whore indeed: for she made me pay her before I lay with her.

Ver. How!——why, have you lain with her?

Man. Ay, ay.

Ver. Nay, she deserves you should report it at least, though you have not

Man. Report it! by Heaven 'tis true.

Ver. How! sure not.

Man. I do not use to lie, nor you to doubt me.

Ver. When?

Man. Last night, about seven or eight of the clock.

Ver. Ha!——now I remember, I thought she spake as if she expected some other, rather than me: a confounded whore indeed!

[*Aside.*

Man. But what, thou wonder'st at it! nay, you seem to be angry too.

Ver. I cannot but be enrag'd against her, for her usage of you: Damn'd, infamous, common jade.

Man. Nay, her cuckold, who first cuckolded me in my money, shall not laugh all himself: we will do him reason, shan't we?

Ver. Ay, ay.

Man. But thou dost not, for so great a friend, take pleasure enough in your friend's revenge, methinks.

Ver. Yes, yes; I'm glad to know it, since you have lain with her.

Man. Thou canst not tell who that rascal, her cuckold is?

Ver. No.

Man. She would keep it from you, I suppose.

Ver. Yes, yes.

Man. Thou would'st laugh, if thou knewest but all the circumstances of my having her. Come, I'll tell thee.

Ver. Damn her: I care not to hear any more of her.

Man. Faith, thou shalt. You must know——

Enter FREEMAN backwards, endeavouring to keep out NOVEL, Lord PLAUSIBLE, JERRY, and OLDFOX, who all press upon him.

Free. I tell you, he has a wench with him, and would be private.

Man. Damn 'em; a man can't open a bottle in these eating-houses, but presently you have these impudent, intruding, buzzing flies and insects in your glass—— Well, I'll tell thee anon. In the mean time, prythee go to her, but not from me, and try if you can get her to lend me but a hundred pound of my money, to supply my present wants; for I suppose there is no recovering any of it by law.

Ver. Not any: think not of it. Nor by this way neither.

Man. Go try, at least.

Ver. I'll go, but I can satisfy you beforehand it will be to no purpose: you'll no more find a refunding wench—

Man. Than a refunding lawyer: indeed their fees alike scarce ever return; however try her; put it to her.

Ver. Ay, ay, I'll try her: put it to her home, with a vengeance.

[*Exit Vernith.*]

Manent cæteri.

No. Nay, you shall be our judge, Manly. Come, Major. I'll speak it to your teeth: if people provoke me to say bitter things to their faces, they must take what follows; though, like my Lord Plausible, I'd rather do't civilly behind their backs.

Man. Nay, thou art a dangerous rogue, I've heard, behind a man's back.

L. Pla. You wrong him sure, noble Captain: he would do a man no more harm behind his back, than to his face.

Free. I am of my Lord's mind.

Man. Yes, a fool, like a coward, is the more to be fear'd behind a man's back. more than a witty man; for as a coward is more bloody than a brave man, a fool is more malicious than a man of wit.

No. A fool, I say — a fool! Nay, thou art a brave sea judge of wit: a fool! Prythee when did you ever find me want something to say, as you do often?

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Man. Nay, I confess, thou art always talking, roaring, or making a noise, that I'll say for thee.

No. Well, and is talking a sign of a fool?

Man. Yes, always talking, especially too if it be loud and fast, is the sign of a fool.

No. Plhaw ! Talking is like fencing, the quicker the better ; run 'em down, run 'em down, no matter for parrying ; push on still, fa, fa, fa : no matter whether you argue in form, push in guard, or no.

Man. Or hit, or no ; I think thou always talk'st without thinking, Novel.

No. Ay, ay ; study'd play's the worst, to follow the allegory, as the old pedant says.

Old. A young fop !

Man. I ever thought the man of most wit had been like him of most money, who has no vanity in shewing it every where ; whilst the beggarly pulher of his fortune, has all he has about him still only to shew.

No. Well, Sir, and make a very pretty shew in the world, let me tell you ; nay, a better than your close hunks. A pox, give me ready money in play. What care I for a man's reputation ? What are we the better for your substantial thrifty curmudgeon in wit, Sir ?

Old. Thou art a profuse young rogue, indeed.

No. So much for talking, which, I think, I have prov'd a mark of wit ; and so is railing, and making a noise : for railing is satire, you know ; and roaring and making a noise, humour.

Enter to them FIDELIA, taking MANLY aside, and shewing him a paper.

Fid. The hour is betwixt seven and eight exactly : 'tis now half an hour after six.

Man. Well, go then to the piazza, and wait for me : as soon as it is quite dark, I'll be with you. I must stay here yet a while for my friend. But is railing satire, Novel ?

[Exit FIDELIA.]

Free. And roaring and making a noise, humour ?

No. What, won't you confess there's humour in roaring and making a noise ?

Free. No.

No. Nor in cutting napkins and hangings?

Man. No, sure.

No. Dull fop!

Old. O rogue, rogue, insipid rogue! Nay, Gentlemen, allow him those things for wit; for his parts ly only that way.

No. Peace, old fool, I wonder not at thee; but that young fellows shou'd be so dull, as to say there's no humour in making a noise, and breaking windows! I tell you there's wit and humour too in both; and a wit is as well known by his frolic, as by his smile.

Old. Pure rogue! there's your modern wit for you! wit and humour in breaking of windows! There's mischief, if you will, but no wit or humour.

No. Pr'ythee, pr'ythee peace, old fool; I tell you, where there's mischief, there's wit. Don't we esteem the monkey a wit amongst beasts. only because he's mischievous? And let me tell you, as good nature is a sign of a fool, being mischievous is a sign of a wit.

Old. O rogue, rogue! pretending to be a wit, by doing mischief and railing.

No. Why, thou old fool, hast thou no other pretence to the name of wit, but by railing at new plays?

Old. Thou, by railing at that facetious noble way of wit, quibbling.

No. Thou call'st thy dulness, gravity; and thy dozing, thinking.

Old. You, Sir, your dulness, spleen; and you talk much, and say nothing.

No. Thou readest much, and understandest nothing, Sir.

Old. You laugh loud, and break no jest.

No. You rail, and nobody hangs himself; and thou hast nothing of the Satyr, but in thy face.

Old. And you have no jest, but your face, Sir.

No. Thou art an illiterate pedant.

Old. Thou art a fool with a bad memory.

Man. Come, a pox on you both, you have done like wits now; for you wits, when you quarrel, never give over till ye prove one another fools.

No. And you fools have never any occasion of laughing at us wits, but when we quarrel: therefore let us be friends, Oldfox.

Man. They are such wits as thou art, who make the name of a wit as scandalous as that of bully; and signify a loud laughing, talking, incorrigible coxcomb, as bully a roaring hardened coward.

Free. And would have his noise and laughing pass for wit, as t'other his hustling and blustering for courage.

Enter VERNISH.

Man. Gentlemen, with your leave, here is one I would speak with; and I have nothing to say to you.

[Puts 'em out of the room.]

Manent MANLY, VERNISH.

Ver. I told you 'twas in vain to think of getting money out of her. She says, if a shilling wou'd do't, she wou'd not save you from starving or hanging, or, what you wou'd think worse, begging or flattering; and rails so at you, one wou'd not think you had lain with her.

Man. O friend, never trust for that matter a woman's railing; for she is no less a dissembler in her hatred than her love: and as her fondness of her husband is a sign he's a cuckold, her railing at another man is a sign she lyes with him.

Ver. He's in the right on't: I know not what to trust to. *[Aside.]*

Man. But you did not take any notice of it to her, I hope?

Ver. So!—Sure he is afraid I should have disprov'd him by an enquiry of her: all may be well yet. *[Aside.]*

Man. What hast thou in thy head, that makes thee seem so unquiet?

Ver. Only this base impudent woman's falseness; I cannot put her out of my head.

Man. O, my dear friend, be not you too sensible of my wrongs; for then I shall feel 'em too with more pain, and think them insufferable. Damn her, her money, and that ill-natur'd whore too, Fortune herself; but if thou wou'd'st

ease a little my present trouble, pr'ythee go borrow me somewhere else some money; I can trouble thee.

Ver. You trouble me, indeed, most sensibly, when you command me any thing I cannot do: I have lately lost a great deal of money at play, more than I can yet pay; so that not only my money but my credit too is gone, and know not where to borrow; but cou'd rob a church for you. Yet wou'd rather end your wants, by cutting your throat. *[Aside.]*

Man. Nay, then I doubly feel my poverty, since I'm incapable of supplying thee. *[Embraces Vernith.]*

Ver. But, methinks, she that granted you the last favour (as they call it) shou'd not deny you any thing——

No. Hey, taurpaulin, have you done?

[Novel looks in, and retires again.]

Ver. I understand not that point of kindness, I confess.

Man. No, thou dost not understand it, and I have not time to let you know all now; for these fools, you see, will interrupt us: but anon, at supper, we'll laugh at leisure together at Olivia's cuckold, who took a young fellow that goes between his wife and me, for a woman.

Ver. Ha!

Man. Senseless, easy rascal! 'twas no wonder she chose him for a husband; but she thought him, I thank her, fitter than me, for that blind, bearing office.

Ver. I cou'd not be deceiv'd in that long woman's hair ty'd up behind, nor those infallible proofs, her pouting swelling breasts: I have handled too many sure, not to know 'em. *[Aside.]*

Man. What, you wonder the fellow could be such a blind coxcomb?

Ver. Yes, yes——

No. Nay, pr'ythee, come to us, Manly; Gad, all the fine things one says in their company, are lost without thee.

[Novel looks in again, and retires.]

Man. Away, fop, I'm busy yet.

You see we cannot talk here at our ease; besides, I must be gone immediately, in order to meeting with Olivia again to-night.

Ver. To-night! it cannot be, sure——

Man. I had an appointment just now from her.

Ver. For what time?

Man. At half an hour after seven precisely.

Ver. Don't you apprehend the husband?

Man. He, sniveling gull! He a thing to be fear'd! a husband! the tameſt of creatures!

Ver. Very fine!

[*Aside.*

Man. But, pr'ythee, in the mean time, go try to get me ſome money. Though thou art too modeſt to borrow for thyſelf, thou can'ſt do any thing for me, I know. Go, for I muſt be gone to Olivia. Go, and meet me here anon — Freeman, where are you?

[*Exit Manly.*

Manet VERNISH.

Ver. Ay, I'll meet with you, I warrant; but it ſhall be at Olivia's. Sure it cannot be: ſhe denies it ſo calmly, and with that honeſt, modeſt aſſurance, it cannot be true — And he does not uſe to lie — But belying a woman, when ſhe won't be kind, is the only lie a brave man will leaſt ſcruple. But then the woman in man's cloaths, whom he calls a man — Well, but, by her breaſts, I know her to be a woman: — But then again, his appointment from her, to meet with him to-night! I am diſtracted more with doubt than jealousy. Well, I have no way to diſabuse or revenge myſelf, but by going home immediately, putting on a riding-ſuit, and pretending to my wife, the ſame buſineſs which carried me out of town laſt, requires me again to go poſt to Oxford to-night. Then, if the appointment he boaſts of be true, it's ſure to hold, and I ſhall have an opportunity either of clearing her, or revenging myſelf on both. Perhaps ſhe is his wench, of an old date, and I am his cully, whilſt I think him mine; and he has ſeem'd to make his wench rich, only that I might take her off his hands: or, if he has but lately lain with her, he muſt needs diſcover by her my treachery to him; which I'm ſure he will revenge with my death, and which I muſt prevent with his, if it were only but for fear of his too juſt reproaches; for I muſt confeſs, I never had till now any excuſe but that of intereſt, for doing ill to him,

[*Exit Verniſh.*

Re-enter MANLY and FREEMAN.

Man. Come hither; only, I say, be sure you mistake not the time: you know the house exactly where Olivia lodges; 'tis just hard by.

Free. Yes, yes.

Man. Well then, bring 'em all, I say, thither, and all you know that may be then in the house; for the more witnesses I have of her infamy, the greater will be my revenge: and be sure you come up strait to her chamber, without more ado. Here, take the watch; you see 'tis above a quarter past seven; be there in half an hour exactly.

Free. You need not doubt my diligence or dexterity: I am an old scourer, and can naturally beat up a wench's quarters that won't be civil. Shan't we break her windows too?

Man. No, no; be punctual only. *[Exeunt ambo.]*

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, and two KNIGHTS of the post, a WAITER with wine.

Wid. Sweetheart, are you sure the door was shut close, that none of those roysters saw us come?

Wait. Yes, Mistress; and you shall have a privater room above, instantly. *[Exit Wait.]*

Wid. You are safe enough, Gentlemen; for I have been private in this house e'er now, upon other occasions, when I was something younger. Come, Gentlemen, in short, I leave my business to your care and fidelity: and so, here's to you.

1 Kni. We are ungrateful rogues, if we should not be honest to you; for we have had a great deal of your money.

Wid. And you have done me many a good job for't; and so, here's to you again.

2 Kni. Why, we have been perjur'd but six times for you.

1 Kni. Forg'd but four deeds, with your husband's last deed of gift.

2 Kni. And but three wills.

1 *Kni.* And counterfeited hands and seals to some six bonds: I think that's all, brother?

Wid. Ay, that's all, Gentlemen: and so, here's to you again.

2 *Kni.* Nav, 'twould do one's heart good to be forsworn for you: you have a conscience in your ways, and pay us well.

1 *Kni.* You are in the right on't, brother; one would be damn'd for her with all one's heart.

2 *Kni.* But there are rogues, who make us forsworn for 'em, and when we come to be paid, they'll be forsworn too, and not pay us wages, which they promis'd with oaths sufficient.

1 *Kni.* Ay, a great lawyer, that shall be nameless, bilk'd me too.

Wid. That was hard, methinks, that a lawyer should not use gentlemen-witnesses better.

2 *Kni.* A lawyer! d'ye wonder a lawyer should do't? I was bilk'd by a reverend divine, that preaches twice on Sundays, and prays half an hour still before dinner.

Wid. How! a conscientious divine, and not pay people for damning themselves! Sure then, for all his talking, he does not believe damnation. But come, to our business: pray, be sure to imitate exactly the flourish at the end of his name.

[Pulls out a deed or two.]

1 *Kni.* O, he's the best in England at untangling a flourish, Madam.

Wid. And let not the seal be a jot bigger: observe well the dash too, at the end of his name.

2 *Kni.* I warrant you, Madam.

Wid. Well, these and many other shifts poor widows are put to sometimes; for every body would be riding a widow, as they say, and breaking into her jointure: they think marrying a widow an easy business, like leaping the hedge, where another has gone over before: a widow is a mere gap, a gap with them.

Enter to them Major OLDFOX, with two Waiters.

[The Knights of the post huddle up the writings. What, he here! Go then, go, my hearts, you have your instructions.]

[Exit Knights of the post.]

Old. Come, Madam, to be plain with you, I'll be fobb'd off no longer. I'll bind her and gag her, but she shall hear me. *[Aside.*

Look you, friends, there's the money I promis'd you; and now do what you promis'd me. Here are my garters, and here's a gag. You shall be acquainted with my parts, Lady, you shall.

Wid. Acquainted with your parts! A rape! a rape!—What, will you ravish me?

[The Waiters ty her to the chair, and gag her, and exeunt.

Old. Yes, Lady, I will ravish you; but it shall be through the ear, Lady, the ear only, with my well-penn'd acrostics.

Enter to them FREEMAN, JERRY BLACKACRE, three BAILIFFS, a CONSTABLE and his Assistants, with the two KNIGHTS of the post.

What, shall I never read my things undisturb'd again?

Jer. O law! my mother bound hand and foot, and gapping as if the rose before her time to-day!

Free. What means this, Oldfox? But I'll release you from him; you shall be no man's prisoner but mine. Bailiffs, execute your writs. *[Freeman unties her.*

Old. Nay, then I'll be gone, for fear of being bail, and paying her debts without being her husband.

[Exit Oldfox.

1 Est. We arrest you in the King's name, at the suit of Mr Freeman, guardian to Jeremiah Blackacre, Esq; in an action of ten thousand pounds.

Wid. How, how! in a choke-bail action! What, and the pen-and-ink gentlemen taken too! Have you confess'd, you rogues?

1 Kni. We needed not to confess; for the Bailiffs have dogg'd us hither to the very door, and overheard all that you and we said.

Wid. Undone, undone then! no man was ever too hard for me till now: O Jerry, child, wilt thou vex again the womb that bore thee?

Jer. Ay, for bearing me before wedlock, as you say;

but I'll teach you to call a Blackacre bastard, tho' you were never so much my mother.

Wid. Well, I'm undone! Not one trick left? no law-meuth imaginable? [*Aside.*

Cruel Sir, a word with you, I pray.

Free. In vain, Madam; for you have no other way to release yourself, but by the bonds of matrimony.

Wid. How, Sir, how! that were but to sue out an *habeas corpus*, for a removal from one prison to another. Matrimony!

Free. Well, Bailiffs, away with her.

Wid. O stay, Sir, can you be so cruel as to bring me under covert-baron again, and put it out of my power to sue in my own name? Matrimony to a woman is worse than excommunication, in depriving her of the benefit of the law; and I would rather be depriv'd of life. But hark you, Sir, I am contented you should hold and enjoy my person by lease or patent, but not by the spiritual patent, call'd a licence; that is, to have the privileges of a husband, without the dominion; that is, *durante beneplacito*: in consideration of which, I will, out of my jointure, secure you an annuity of three hundred pounds a-year, and pay your debts; and that's all you younger brothers desire to marry a widow for, I'm sure.

Free. Well, Widow, if—

Jer. What, I hope, bully guardian, you are not making agreement without me?

Free. No, no. First, Widow, you must say no more that he is a son of a whore; have a care of that: and then, he must have a settled exhibition of forty pounds a-year, and a nag of assizes, kept by you, but not upon the common; and have free ingress, egress, and regress, to and from your maid's garret.

Wid. Well, I can grant all that too.

Jer. Ay, ay, fair words butter no cabbage; but, guardian, make her sign, sign and seal; for otherwise, if you knew her as well as I, you would not trust her word for a farthing.

Free. I warrant thee, Squire. Well, Widow, since thou

art so generous, I will be generous too; and if you'll secure me four hundred pounds a year, but during your life, and pay my debts, not above a thousand pounds; I'll bate you your person, to dispose of as you please.

Wid. Have a care, Sir; a settlement without a consideration, is void in law: you must do something for't.

Free Prithee then, let the settlement on me be call'd alimony; and the consideration, our separation: come, my lawyer, with writings ready drawn, is within, and in haste come.

Wid. But, what, no other kind of consideration, Mr Freeman? Well, a widow, I see, is a kind of sinecure, by custom of which the unconscionable incumbent enjoys the profits, without any duty, but does that still elsewhere.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

The SCENE Changes to Olivia's Lodging.

Enter OLIVIA with a candle in her hand.

Oli. So, I am now prepar'd once more for my timorous young lover's reception: my husband is gone; and go thou out too, thou next interrupter of love—[*Puts out the candle.*] Kind darkness! that frees us lovers from scandal and bashfulness, from the censure of our gallants and the world—So, are you there?

Enter to Olivia, FIDELIA, follow'd softly by MANLY.

Come, my dear punctual lover, there is not such another in the world; thou hast beauty and youth to please a wife: address and wit, to amuse and fool a husband; nay, thou hast all things to be wish'd in a lover, but your fits: I hope, my dear, you won't have one to-night; and that you may not, I'll lock the door, tho' there be no need of it, but to lock out your fits: for my husband is just gone out of town again. Come, where are you?

[*Goes to the door, and locks it.*]

Man Well, thou hast impudence enough to give me fits too, make revenge itself impotent, and hinder me from making thee yet more infamous, if it can be. [*Aside.*]

Oli. Come, come, my soul, come.

Fid. Presently, my dear, we have time enough sure,

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Oli. How! time enough! True lovers can no more think they ever have time enough, than love enough: you shall stay with me all night; but that is but a lover's moment. Come.

Fid. But won't you let me give you and myself the satisfaction of telling you how I abus'd your husband last night?

Oli. Not when you can give me, and yourself too, the satisfaction of abusing him again to-night. Come.

Fid. Let me but tell you how your husband —

Oli. O name not his, or Manly's more loathsome name, if you love me; I forbid 'em last night: and you know I mention'd my husband but once, and he came. No talking, pray, 'twas ominous to us. You make me fancy a noise at the door already, but I'm resolv'd not to be interrupted. [*A noise at the door.*] Where are you? Come; for rather than lose my dear expectation now, tho' my husband were at the door, and the bloody ruffian Manly here in the room, with all his awful insolence, I wou'd give myself to this dear hand, to be led away to heavens of joys, which none but thou canst give. But what's this noise at the door? So, I told you what talking wou'd come to. [*The noise at the door increases.*] Ha! — O Heavens! my husband's voice! — [*Olivia listens at the door.*]

Man. Freeman is come too soon. [*Aside.*]

Oli. O, 'tis he! — Then here's the happiest minute lost, that ever bashful boy, or trifling woman fool'd away! I'm undone! my husband's reconciliation too was false, as my joy, all delusion: but come this way, here's a back door. [*Exit, and returns.*]

The officious jade has lock'd us in, instead of locking others out; but let us then escape our way, by the balcony; and whilst you pull down the curtains, I'll fetch from my closet what next will best secure our escape: I have left my key in the door, and 'twill not suddenly be broken open. [*Exit.*]

[*A noise as it were people forcing the door.*]

Man. Stir not yet, fear nothing.

Fid. Nothing but your life, Sir.

Man. We shall know this happy man she calls husband,

OLIVIA *re-enters.*

Oli. Oh, where are you? What, idle with fear? Come, I'll tie the curtain, if you will hold. Here, take this cabinet and purse, for it is thine, if we escape.

[Manly takes from her the cabinet and purse. Therefore let us make haste. [Exit Oli.]

Man. 'Tis mine indeed now again, and it shall never escape more from me, to you at least. *[Aside.]*

[The door broke open, enter VERNISH alone, with a dark lanthorn and a sword, running at Manly, who draws, puts by the thrust, and defends himself; whilst Fidelia runs at Vernish behind.]

Ver. So, there I'm right sure—— *[With a low voice.]*

Man. Softly.] Sword and dark lanthorn, villain, are some odds; but——

Ver. Odds! I'm sure I find more odds than I expected: what, has my insatiable two seconds at once? But——

[With a low voice.]

[Whilst they fight, OLIVIA re-enters, tying two curtains together.]

Oli. Where are you now?——What, is he entered then? and are they fighting? O do not kill one that can make no defence. *[Manly throws Vernish down and disarms him.]* How! but I think he has the better on't: here's his scarf, 'tis he. So, keep him down still: I hope thou hast no hurt, my dearest? *[Embracing Manly.]*

Enter to them FREEMAN, Lord PLAUSIBLE, NOVEL, JERRY BLACKACRE, and the Widow BLACKACRE, lighted by the two Sailors with torches.

Ha!—what—Manly! and have I been thus concern'd for him? embracing him? and has he his jewels again too? What means this? O, 'tis too sure, as well as my shame! which I'll go hide for ever.

[Offers to go out, and Manly stops her.]

Man. No, my dearest, after so much kindness as has pass'd between us, I cannot part with you yet. Freeman, let nobody stir out of the room; for notwithstanding your lights, we are yet in the dark, till this gentleman please to turn his face—— *[Pulls Vernish by the sleeve]*

How! Vernish! art thou the happy man then? Thou! Thou! speak, I say; but thy guilty silence tells me all— Well, I shall not upbraid thee; for my wonder is striking me as dumb, as thy shame has made thee. But what? my little volunteer hurt and fainting!

Fid. My wound, Sir, is but a slight one in my arm; 'tis only my fear of your danger, Sir, not yet well over.

Man. But what's here? more strange things!

[Observing Fidelia's hair untied behind, and without a peruke, which she lost in the scuffle.]

What means this long woman's hair, and face? now all of it appears too beautiful for a man; which I still thought womanish indeed! What, you have not deceiv'd me too, my little volunteer?

Oli. Me the has, I'm sure.

[Aside.]

Man. Speak.

Enter ELIZA and LETTICE.

Eliz. What, Cousin, I am brought hither by your woman, I suppose, to be a witness of the second vindication of your honour?

Oli. Insulting is not generous: you might spare me, I have you.

Eliz. Have a care, cousin, you'll confess anon too much; and I would not have your secrets.

Man. Come, your bluthes answer me sufficiently, and you have been my volunteer in love. *[To Fidelia.]*

Fid. I must confess, I needed no compulsion to follow you all the world over; which I attempted in this habit partly out of shame to own my love to you, and fear of a greater shame, your refusal of it: for I knew of your engagement to this lady, and the constancy of your nature; which nothing could have alter'd, but herself.

Man. Dear Madam, I desir'd you to bring me out of confusion, and you have given me more; I know not what to speak to you, or how to look upon you; the sense of my rough, hard, and ill-usage of you (tho' chiefly your own fault) gives me more pain now 'tis over, than you had when you suffer'd it: and if my heart, the refusal of such a woman, *[Pointing to Olivia]* were not a sacrifice

too profane for your love, and a greater wrong to you than ever yet I did you, I wou'd beg of you to receive it, tho' you us'd it as she had done ; for tho' it deserv'd not from her the treatment she gave it, it does from you.

Fid. Then it has had punishment sufficient from her already, and needs no more from me : and, I must confess, I wou'd not be the only cause of making you break your last night's oath to me, of never parting with me ; if you do not forget to repent it.

Man. Then take for ever my heart, and this with it ; [*Gives her the cabinet.*] for 'twas given to you before, and my heart was before your due : I only beg leave to dispose of these few—Here, Madam, I never yet left my wench unpaid.

[*Takes some of the jewels, and offers 'em to Olivia ; she strikes 'em down : Plausible and Novel take 'em up.*

Oli. So it seems, by giving her the cabinet.

L. Pla. These pendants appertain to your most faithful humble servant.

No. And this locket is mine ; my earnest for love, which she never paid : therefore my own again.

Wid. By what law, Sir, pray ? Cousin Olivia, a word. What, do they make a seizure on your goods and chattels, *vi et armis* ? Make your demand, I say, and bring your trover, bring your trover. I'll follow the law for you.

Oli. And I my revenge.

[*Exit Olivia.*

Man. to Ver.] But 'tis, my friend, in your consideration most, that I would have return'd part of your wife's portion ; for 'twere hard to take all from thee, since thou hast paid so dear for't, in being such a rascal : yet thy wife is a fortune without a portion ; and thou art a man of that extraordinary merit in villainy, the world and fortune can never desert thee, though I do ; therefore be not melancholy. Fare you well, Sir. [*Exit Vernish doggedly.*] Now, Madam, I beg your pardon, [*turning to Fidelia.*] for lessening the present I made you ; but my heart can never be lessen'd : This, I confess, was too small for you before ; for you deserve the Indian world ; and I would now go thither, out of covetousness for your sake only.

Fid. Your heart, Sir, is a present of that value, I can

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never make any return to't : [*Pulling Manly from the company.*] But I can give you back such a present as this, which I got by the loss of a father, a gentleman in the north, of no mean extraction, whose only child I was, therefore left me in the present possession of two thousand pounds a-year; which I left, with multitudes of pretenders, to follow you, Sir; having in several public places seen you, and observ'd your actions thoroughly, with admiration, when you were too much in love to take notice of mine, which yet was but too visible. The name of my family is Grey, my other Fidelia : The rest of my story you shall know when I have fewer auditors.

Man. Nay now, Madam, you have taken from me all power of making you any compliment on my part; for I was going to tell you, that for your sake only, I would quit the unknown pleasure of a retirement; and rather stay in this ill world of ours still, though odious to me, than give you more frights again at sea, and make again too great a venture there, in you alone. But if I should tell you now all this, and that your virtue (since greater than I thought any was in the world) had now reconcil'd me to't, my friend here wou'd say, 'tis your estate that has made me friends with the world.

Free. I must confess I shou'd; for I think most of our quarrels to the world, are just such as we have to a handsome woman; only because we cannot enjoy her as we would do.

Man. Nay, if thou art a *plain-dealer* too, give me thy hand; for now I'll say, I am thy friend indeed: And for your two sakes, though I have been so lately deceiv'd in friends of both sexes,

I will believe there are now in the world
Good-natur'd friends, who are not prostitutes,
And handsome women worthy to be friends:
Yet, for my sake, let no one e'er confide
In tears or oaths, in love, or friend untry'd.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by the Widow BLACKACRE.

TO you the judges learned in stage-laws,
Our poet now, by me, submits his cause ;
For with young judges, such as most of you,
The men by women best their business do :
And, truth on't is, if you did not sit here,
To keep for us a term throughout the year,
We cou'd not live by'r tongues : Nay, but for you,
Our chamber-practise wou'd be little too.
And 'tis not only the stage-practicer
Who, by your meeting, gets her living here ;
For, as in a hall of Westminster,
Sleek sempstresses vents, amidst the courts, her ware ;
So while we bawl, and you in judgment sit,
The visor-mask sells linens too i'th' pit.
O, many of your friends, beside us here,
Do live by putting off their sev'ral ware.
Here's daily done the great affairs o' th' nation ;
Let love and us then ne'er have long vacation.
But hold ; like other pleaders I have done
Not my poor client's business, but my own.
Spare me a word then, now, for him. First know,
'Squires of the long robe, he does humbly shew,
He has a just right in abusing you,
Because he is a Brother-Templar too :
For at the bar you rally one another ;
Nay, fool and knave is swallow'd from a brother :
If not the Poet here, the Templar spare,
And maul him when you catch him at the bar.
For you, our common modish censurers,
Your favour, not your judgment 'tis he fears :
Of all love begs you then to rail, find fault ;
For plays, like women, by the world are thought
(When you speak kindly of 'em) very naught.



END OF THE PLAIN DEALER.

